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R. NORMAN MATHENY – STAFF/FILE

BUSINESS AS USUAL, TIANANMEN SQUARE: *Four years after unarmed students faced down tanks here, few traces remain of the democracy uprising. Some students are concentrating on earning money.*

With new economic opportunities, students are more focused on their personal futures than on politics

Campus Activism Takes Back Seat To Economic Progress in China

By Sheila Tefft

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BEIJING

AMONG the traditional Chinese halls, wooded walkways, and cool lagoons of Beijing University, business and politics intertwine in an uneasy student quiet.

Today, many at Beijing's elite universities say the stormy days of democracy protests in 1989 are lost four years later as students scramble aboard the new market bandwagon and find ways to make money and land good jobs. The new heroes on campus, they say, are no longer the leaders of four years ago but fast-talking wheeler-dealers earning big incomes editing books, selling garments, or wholesaling scrap metal.

"Money is not almighty, but without it you can't ... expect respect from others," says one student entrepreneur who says he no longer relies on family support. "Now I really feel I am a man."

"One thing is obvious. Presently, the idea of the market economy has a deep influence in the hearts of the Chinese people and the students," said Wang Yiqiu, provost of Beijing University, commonly called Beida, in a Monitor interview. "Students are, of course, concerned about state affairs. But they are more concerned about their personal futures after graduation."

But professors, dissidents from 1989, and new student activists say the calm masks undercurrents of resentment and uncertainty about economic changes.

BEIJING CAMPUSES
4 YEARS AFTER TIANANMEN

In a poll of more than 1,600 students organized by the student unions of People's, Beijing, Qinghua, and Beijing Normal Universities in March, about half said they worry about the uneven pace and role of intellectuals in market reforms, and want political participation but lack the channels.

In other polls, many students voiced concerns about the lack of development in their home

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US Economy at Critical Juncture, Economists Say

Business decisionmakers complain that Washington gives mixed policy signals

By Ron Scherer

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

NEW YORK

IN January, Lex Taylor stopped hiring new people at his Louisville, Miss., forklift plant.

"We just don't know what is going to happen. What is health care going to cost us and what is going to happen to taxation?" says Mr. Taylor, president of Taylor Machine Works, which employs about 700 people.

Taylor is not alone. Business executives and economists say the United States economy has now reached a critical juncture.

"People are very concerned about the future," says economist Paul Kasriel, a vice president at Northern Trust Company in Chicago. This concern is reflected in consumer confidence, which plummeted in May, according to a Conference Board survey. And there are some disturbing portents that the US economy might be slipping back into neutral.

Last Friday, the US Commerce Department reported the nation's first quarter gross domestic product (GDP), the nation's output of goods and services, was weaker than originally reported. The government revised the first quarter growth rate down from a 1.8 percent real annual rate to only a 0.9 percent rate. On Thursday, the government reported durable goods orders for April were weaker than expected.

The GDP growth was adversely affected by the weather in March and is expected to bounce back. Merrill Lynch chief economist Donald Straszheim forecasts GDP to grow at a 2.5 percent rate or higher in the second quarter. Mr. Straszheim frets that the durable goods report indicates that the industrial sector is losing momentum.

Businesses offer some anecdotal evidence the economy is on a stop-and-start course. "Our business has been like a stair step – it improves, then goes sideways,

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Clinton Moves to Shore Up Support for His Fiscal Plan

By John Dillin

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON

SINKING dangerously in the polls, President Clinton has moved swiftly to strengthen his political standing with the voters – and with a worried Congress.

The president's next major test on Capitol Hill comes soon. His $1.5 trillion budget, which narrowly passed the House last week, goes to the Senate, where antitax lawmakers, Democrats and Republicans alike, have their muskets primed and ready.

Mr. Clinton, sensing possible defeat, has acted publicly and privately to shore up support.

The most dramatic effort came over the Memorial Day weekend. Clinton stunned Washington by selecting a Republican moderate, David Gergen, editor-at-large with U.S. News & World Report, to be his counselor. Mr. Gergen, a former aide to three GOP presidents, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan, becomes part of Clinton's inner circle of advisers. **(Praise for the move, Page 2.)**

Privately, Clinton also tried to soften Senate opposition to his budget by courting Sen. David Boren (D) of Oklahoma, the leading foe of his energy, or Btu, tax.

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As Guatemala's president maintains his grip on media, people struggle to end 'temporary' dictatorship.
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The Economist, which now has a new editor, boasts twice as many readers in America as in Britain.
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Appointment Of Gergen Stuns Politicos

WASHINGTON WATCH

IMAGINE the reaction if President Bush – after spending years criticizing Jimmy Carter – had suddenly appointed Jody Powell, Mr. Carter's press secretary, as his communications director.

That, roughly, is what happened this past weekend when President Clinton tapped David Gergen – a veteran of three GOP administrations – to run his communications operation with the title of "counselor to the president."

The appointment shocked Washingtonians of all political stripes because Mr. Gergen was the chief salesman of Reaganomics – an economic doctrine that Mr. Clinton blamed for many of the nation's woes during the 1992 campaign.

Clearly, the president must have figured he is in dire political straits to reach so boldly across the political aisle. The move was immediately praised by conservative Democrats, such as Georgia Sen. Sam Nunn, but Senate minority leader Bob Dole (R) of Kansas suggested the problem in the White House was "not the messenger, it's the message," referring to Clinton's economic plans.

Among the White House staff, Gergen's appointment has set off a ripple effect. George Stephanopoulos will give up his title as communications director to concentrate on offering the president long-range advice, while Press Secretary Dee Dee Myers apparently will take over Mr. Stephanopoulos's role as the White House's chief mouthpiece.

Many more staff changes may be coming in the near future as the president tries to get his administration back on track.

Clinton at the wall

President Clinton, who opposed the Vietnam War and once thanked a mentor for "saving me from the draft," faced the ghosts of his youth by deciding to speak at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on his first Memorial Day as commander-in-chief. "I can't run away," he said.

The president was speaking during ceremonies yesterday at the black marble wall that serves as a stark reminder of the thousands of lives lost during the Asian conflict.

His speech at the wall was sure to anger some veterans and their families, and was a risky political move for an already battered president.

On the one hand, it called attention to the controversy over his efforts to avoid the draft. But it also offered him the chance to bury the matter as a political issue, while helping his generation – and the country – come to grips with the war.

– Compiled by Max Boot

After Budget Battle: Health Care

White House gears up to sell universal-access health-care plan with a hefty price tag

By Marshall Ingwerson
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

WASHINGTON

AS the White House moves from battle to battle over its budget, it is preparing to launch a whole new war.

Sometime within the next month, according to White House aides, President Clinton will send a health-care plan to Congress.

The rough and tumble that follows, says one Senate aide who works on health legislation, "will make [budget] reconciliation look like child's play."

The White House is battening down for "a real roller coaster in coming months," Ira Magaziner, senior adviser at the White House and director of its health-care task force, said last week in a speech.

The health-care war is the big one for the Clinton administration.

Not that the health-care system is more important to voters than the economy. Voters are ranking jobs as their first concern. But the health-care overhaul is a more clear-cut opportunity for Mr. Clinton to attach an achievement of historic proportions to his presidency.

The difficulty level is towering. Many Democrats are gritting their teeth, awaiting the fury aroused by throwing new health-care taxes on top of the tax increases Clinton has already proposed in his fiscal plan.

The White House has apparently decided not to be stingy. Under the Clinton plan, in a few years, perhaps even by 1996, every American will carry a "health security card" good for a generous package of comprehensive medical services.

This is the single most visible and potentially popular aspect of the plan. "Security is what this health-care debate is all about," Hillary Rodham Clinton told a service workers' union last week. "Can your family have piece of mind? Can you or your child get the quality of care when you need it most?"

But the pivotal question for voters, says Robert Blendon, a Harvard University expert on the politics of health policy, is: "What's the price for me to feel secure? What's it worth to the average taxpayer per month?"

The health-care debate that the White House plans to launch next month will be as complex and arcane as public policy gets. But shortly after Clinton takes it public, middle-class Americans will begin hearing in plain language how much more secure their health insurance will become and how much it is likely to cost them.

The White House must stretch its public support between the attractiveness of the secure new health benefits for all and the added cost.

Although most Americans are satisfied with their health-care plans, many are insecure about them. A job change or health problem in the family can mean loss of insurance coverage. Mr. Magaziner estimates that 50,000 Americans a month lose their insurance.

MIKE THEILER/REUTERS

'Security is what this health-care debate is all about. Can your family have piece of mind? Can you or your child get the quality of care when you need it most?'
– Hillary Rodham Clinton

The Clinton plan is designed to eliminate that insecurity and bring the 37 million uninsured into the health-care system. Universal coverage will not be instant, but spread over a number of years. The faster it phases in the more it will cost. But the administration appears to have opted for a very fast-track option, perhaps as short as three or four years.

Giving Americans secure insurance is politically potent. "The only thing that's visible nationwide is universal access," says Sen. David Durenberger (R) of Minnesota, a moderate Republican and potential Clinton ally in the Senate. Then Clinton can campaign in 1996 by claiming that everyone in America has health insurance, he says. On the other hand, "cost containment is not politically pizzazzy."

The insurance package that the Clinton plan will guarantee will be generous. Administration officials have suggested they will establish a comprehensive core benefits package at a level as high or higher than the benefits 80 percent of Americans now receive.

The more generous the benefits, the more they will cost. The White House, says Dr. Blendon, "is more afraid of individuals not liking the benefits of the plan." He adds: "I'm more afraid of taxpayer revolts."

In 1988, Congress passed the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act to help cover the expenses of the less affluent elderly, paid for by the more affluent. It was repealed 18 months later in the face of outraged elderly voters who felt they were paying too much for what they got.

How the benefits are to be paid for will be critical to how the Clinton plan is received in Congress. The White House is leaning toward mandating that employers offer insurance. This sets up a health benefits versus jobs debate, since most job creation occurs in small businesses with the littlest profit margins and least ability to afford health insurance.

These mandates are especially troubling to the conservative Democrats and moderate Republicans that Clinton will need to loop into a winning alliance behind his health plan. Most prefer subsidies to help small businesses pay for these mandates.

The debate will be complicated by the abortion factor. The White House has indicated that abortion services will be included in the basic benefits package. Abortion is likely to mobilize opposition whether it is included or excluded from the package. Most Americans support the legality of abortion – but there is no majority behind federal funding of abortion.

If the administration can thread the needle on its health-care plan, says Republican pollster Fred Steeper, "they could get a big win out of it."

Health Insurers Seek Fair Debate

HARTFORD, CONN.

THE United States health-insurance industry is hoping for a constructive debate on reform, but it is concerned that there will be a titanic struggle with the White House, insurers and industry analysts say.

"We are not the enemy, despite what Hillary Rodham Clinton says," said Claire del Real, spokeswoman for the Health Care Leadership Council.

Whether speaking at lunches or on the radio, insurers are trying to convince people that private industry is best suited to manage health care. They have taken a low-key, almost academic approach. But they say the debate may get nasty if Mrs. Clinton's speech to health-care workers last week is an indication. In the speech, she said the industry is racked by "price-gouging, cost-shifting, and unconscionable profiteering."

Industry spokesmen are concerned such language will interfere with reform. "This is a big enough problem that it needs total cooperation between both groups to get it done," said Dan Kaferle, spokesman for Travelers Corporation.

While insurers lack the political clout of the White House, analysts believe that they bring pressure to bear on Congress and the administration.

– Reuters

Pacific Mushroom Business Attracts Tax Evasion, Competitive Violence

By Brad Knickerbocker
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

ASHLAND, ORE.

A NEW kind of conflict over natural resources is emerging in the Pacific Northwest, one that has a special "Old West" flavor of outlaw economics and the potential for violence.

Unlike the "noble" salmon or the "ancient" forests, this resource seems more mundane, although it brings a high price abroad from those with sophisticated tastes. It's wild mushrooms – morels, chanterelles, matsutakes, and porinis.

Competition is pitting highly independent old-timers protective of their secret mushroom treasure spots against groups of hired harvesters: Northwest natives against migrants and immigrants from Latin America and Asia, and within this latter group, especially Cambodians, those who bear grudges against their fellow countrymen from past and present wars back home.

"It's a high gambling stakes business with a lot of illegal activity going on," says Matt Briggs, owner of Cascade Mushrooms. in Portland, the largest buyer and seller of wild mushrooms in the United States. Much of what has become a multimillion-dollar business is conducted in cash to avoid taxes.

There have been several recent incidents of gunfire in the woods to frighten off rivals, and some people report having been robbed at gunpoint of their buckets of valuable mushrooms. One Asian picker was shot to death in a remote part of Oregon last October, a murder that remains unsolved.

The region has always been a prime source of edible mushrooms. The combination of vast forests and seasonal rainy weather provides productive growing in spring and fall, especially where there have been fires. But with high demand in Europe and Japan – where mushroom consumption is many times the per-capita rate of the US – the best pickers can make several hundred dollars a day.

This has put a lot of pressure on private and public forest land, where people with rakes and buckets scour the prime areas. This is particularly disturbing to recreational mushroom lovers.

"I haven't got anything against people making a profit. But where it's turning into greed and violence, that's going too far," says Maggie Rogers, a librarian who loves to search out wild mushrooms around Mt. Hood and is active with the Oregon Mycological Society.

Says Don Coombs, of Moscow, Idaho, who publishes "Mushroom, the Journal of Wild Mushrooming": "Our readers hate it when they go out to their favorite place and find nothing but cut stems and picked-over dirt."

Many pickers are out-of-work loggers, construction workers, and others in seasonal jobs who resent newcomers invading their turf. The tension can be racial, but some observers say confrontations are just as likely to have different roots – between Cambodians who were royalists and those who may have favored the Khmer Rouge, for example.

Others cite a different work ethic. "I've been in the woods, and I think the Asians just work harder," says Pete Marx, warehouse manager for Pacific Mushrooms in Eugene, Ore.

"It's a case where people are trying to make a living in a competitive situation without rules," Mr. Coombs says. "Some people brought in as pickers have been hauled out of desparate situations and put into desparate situations."

Much picking is done on national forests, where officials are beginning to regulate the activity by requiring permits. For someone who wants to gather mushrooms for an omelet or salad, the permit is free. A commercial permit for the season costs $100.

"We've had a lot of people obtaining permits, 750 commercial permits so far," says Annie Hanson of the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest in northeastern Oregon. "I think we're getting pretty good compliance compared to a couple of years ago." Still, checking up on pickers – especially those trying to earn "free money" by avoiding taxes – is difficult, at best.

"It's impossible to enforce," Ms. Rogers says. "You're talking about hundreds of square miles."

Legitimate dealers, who keep records of transactions and pay taxes on a business whose profit margins are slim, are urging more government control.

Mr. Briggs would like to see the Internal Revenue Service, Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Commerce Department get more involved. "If they did, there'd be an end to commercial crime in the woods."

At the administration's forest conference in Portland in April, some speakers said at a time of declining timber harvests because of endangered-species protection, managers of federal forest land should look for ways to encourage development of specialty forest products – including wild mushrooms.

"There's a strong argument, with some documentation, that you can make more money off the Northwest forests harvesting mushrooms than from clear-cutting," Coombs says.

ROBERT HARBISON – STAFF/FILE

NORTHERN CASCADES, WASH.: *The combination of vast forests and seasonal rainy weather provides lucrative crops of mushrooms throughout the Pacific Northwest.*

Texas Enacts New School-Funding Law Under the Wire

In latest bid to meet court mandate, state gears up to transfer funds to poor districts

By Scott Pendleton
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

AUSTIN, TEXAS

A QUARTER-century of legal challenges over the way Texas funds its public schools may have ended yesterday, when Gov. Ann Richards signed a new school finance law that will transfer between $200 and $400 million a year from wealthy districts to poorer ones.

But some observers predict that the new law is no better a solution, and no more invulnerable to legal attack, than three previous plans thrown out by the state supreme court.

Meanwhile, legislators say a jump in failures by high school seniors on a statewide test underscores the need to put the financing issue in the past and move on to reforming what takes place inside the schools.

Last week, some 13,400 seniors – or 7.4 percent of the total – learned they failed at least one part of the reading, writing, and math test known as the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills. The failure rate was only 3.4 percent last year.

A judge allowed seniors who failed to participate in graduation ceremonies, but they must pass the exam to get a diploma.

School funding is at the heart of a debate over education quality in the state, a debate that has only grown more contentious. In signing the funding law, Governor Richards averted a cutoff of $1.5 billion in state funds that would have begun today under a court order dated more than a year ago. A cutoff would have forced public schools to close.

With the deadline looming, the Legislature adopted a plan allowing the roughly 10 percent of wealthiest districts to decide how to lower their taxable property to a level of $280,000 per student – still well above the $100,000 state average.

The wealthy districts can do one of the following:

- Write a check to the state.
- Transfer property into a poor district.
- Merge tax bases with a poor district.
- Consolidate completely with a poor district.
- Or contract to educate students from a poor district.

Wealthy districts can be forced to comply if they do not do so voluntarily.

State courts have said that the law will be presumed legal unless challenged successfully. Detractors say that will happen eventually, and that the only real solution is to throw out the state's "antiquated" tax system and start anew.

Texas is divided into more than 1,000 school districts. They receive some of their money from the state and raise the rest by taxing the value of property inside their boundaries.

Districts that contain industrial facilities, commercial property, or lots of land are able to raise more money per pupil than districts that do not, even when the latter tax themselves at a much higher rate.

Poor districts argued this system discriminated against their students. The Texas Supreme Court agreed in essence, ruling that the system was "inefficient," which put it in violation of the state Constitution.

The Legislature crafted a new method of funding which transferred money from property-rich districts to neighboring poorer ones. But the wealthy districts persuaded the courts to throw this system out early in 1992, on the basis that it violated a Texas constitutional ban on statewide property taxes.

To avoid disrupting Texas schools, the court allowed the system to remain in force until a new one could be adopted, and set today as a deadline.

The Legislature adopted a plan this spring that would have made the system legal by having voters amend the state Constitution to allow the transfer. Instead, they rejected the unpopular system by a two-to-one margin last month, causing the Legislature to formulate the plan that Richards signed yesterday.

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Senator Boren, who sometimes describes himself as a "militant moderate," hailed both developments, including his discussions with the president. He told one interviewer: "What's happened ... cannot be overstated in terms of its importance. This was a watershed week for the president."

Boren now expects a compromise, but it will be politically difficult. The president's $71.5 billion energy tax would be cut. But how would that revenue be replaced, as it must be under an earlier congressional budget agreement? Boren has targeted popular programs for cuts, including Social Security and Medicare.

CLINTON'S actions – reaching out through Gergen to both moderate Democrats like Boren and to Republicans – could help the president forge a bipartisan compromise. Just as important, it could shore up Clinton's image with voters as "a new kind of Democrat," as he promised in 1992.

His staff expressed elation: "We've got a presidency on the move now," White House adviser Paul Begala said on TV.

But the shift toward the center could force Clinton to modify his proposals – which could anger Capitol Hill liberals.

At a recent breakfast meeting with reporters, Boren complained that up to now, Clinton has used a one-house, liberal strategy in dealing with Congress. First on his $16.5 billion economic stimulus package, then again on his budget, Clinton initially followed the same path. He dealt with House Democrats, shunned Republicans, and ignored the Senate. Boren says this tactic pulled Clinton sharply to the left.

"No wonder the [Ross] Perot phenemenon keeps growing," says Boren.

The appointment of Gergen, and the willingness to scale back the energy tax, both signal that Clinton is moving back "between the 40-yard lines," where Boren says most Americans reside politically. The Oklahoma senator says the president now should strive for a budget deal that reflects a compromise between the more liberal House and the centrist Senate.

What could such a compromise be? Leon Panetta, director of the Office of Management and Budget, says the final budget must still do three things:

- Contain $500 billion in budget deficit reductions over five years.
- Be progressive by making wealthy taxpayers carry a bigger load.
- Include a broad-based energy tax.

Boren, who says there are 10 to 12 Democratic senators who oppose Clinton's budget as it was passed by the House, agrees with Mr. Panetta's broad principles. But he adds two more of his own.

First, the Clinton energy tax must be scaled back sharply. It must not injure export industries (and cost jobs) by raising their costs of fuel and feedstocks. Second, Clinton's ratio of spending cuts ($220 billion) to new taxes ($270 billion) must be improved to a 2-to-1 ratio in favor of cuts.

As the public learns the details of Clinton's budget, support has declined, says David Moore, a pollster with Gallup. At present, public opinion is sharply divided, with 44 percent for the Clinton plan, 45 percent against.

But Boren's proposal may be even less popular. He would reduce cost-of-living allowances for Social Security and federal government retirees, and scale back Medicare. The public rejects that, 72 to 22, Mr. Moore reports.

Even so, Boren says if Democrats don't vote for more spending cuts than new taxes, they "will become a minority party."

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towns or villages, the "ominous" gap between the fast-growing eastern coast and the poor interior, and the growing burdens of farmers.

Since 1989, those worries have prompted efforts to revive campus activism. In 1991 and 1992, students at Beijing Normal and People's Universities began reorganizing, issuing pamphlets, holding lectures, and issuing a mimeographed newsletter called Dajia, meaning "all of us." But the resurgence ended last year when police tracked down and arrested the organizers.

This spring, Beida clamped down on a flurry of protests. During the annual session of the National People's Congress in March, posters denouncing the rubber-stamp parliament and rigged university student elections appeared.

'Money is not almighty, but without it you can't ... expect respect from others.'
– A student entrepreneur

Wang Jiaqi, a graduate student of law, was chosen as his department's representative on the student union only to have the authorities block his election because of his political activism. He has been threatened with dismissal, students say.

During a campus-wide speech contest organized by the student union, a student who had completed the one year of military training was heckled off the stage when he tried to speak on the training benefits. An Army officer who later took the stage also was booed.

On a May 4 observance of a Chinese intellectual movement, three Beijing law students, Wang Zongqiu, Zhou Hu, and Liu Jun were detained along with a People's University student for trying to organize a march after a rock concert. The university also blames Yuan Hongbing, an outspoken law professor and teacher of the students, for involvement.

But many dissidents admit it will take time to reactivate students. "It seems there is a generation gap. There are no successors to the 1989 leaders, so no impact can be exerted on the students," says a professor who lost his job for backing the 1989 protests. "This is a silent time for intellectuals."

What is new, campus observers say, is the push to get good jobs and to make money, although the extent of the latter is widely exaggerated by the Chinese press, students say.

According to new government regulations, students are not allowed to have part-time jobs or to go into business. But with growing numbers of students paying their own tuition and wanting to improve poor campus living conditions, the need to find a job on the side is growing.

In addition, fewer students are choosing to join the Communist Party, the fast-track to success in the past, not out of political rebellion, but a lack of interest. A student party member at People's University, the most orthodox of Beijing's campuses, estimated that 90 percent of students belong to the Communist Youth League but few become party members.

"Now more students are opting for not working for the government and party organizations because economic changes have brought new opportunities," said the student who plans to work for the party newspaper, People's Daily, because she couldn't get a job elsewhere. Another People's University student and party member also had planned to follow the communist career track until he got into the lucrative but illicit trade of being a campus book agent.

In recent years, many students have begun buying book rights from state-controlled publishing houses under the table. They then translate foreign best-sellers or write and edit books sold on the open market.

The student, who asked that his name not be used, has produced study guides and business books, and can earn up to $500 for each.

Financially comfortable, the student has scuttled all thoughts of pursuing a Communist Party position and intends to work for a private company in south China. Still, he insists, "I believe in communism. It is an ideal system as outlined by Marx."

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then down," says Richard Stuckey, chief economist for the DuPont Company in Wilmington, Del. Looking at DuPont's order books, Mr. Stuckey says, "There is not a pattern you have a lot of confidence in."

In a survey released today of 15,000 businesses, Manpower Inc. reports little corporate enthusiasm for adding staff over the next three months. "Despite the fact that 1 of every 4 businesses plans to add workers in the third quarter, the broad outlook lacks the robustness seen in the 1983-84 recovery period," says Mitchell Fromstein, president of the Milwaukee-based company.

Waiting for Washington

The Kiva Container Corporation in Phoenix is also feeling the effects of uncertainty. "We see a little spurt and then orders fall back," says Ruth Stafford, treasurer. She blames part of the cutbacks on uncertainty over policy in Washington.

One result she observes: "People are afraid of putting inventory on the floor." She says customers are cuttin costs by using one color on cardboard containers instead of multiples.

Business executives also report that export orders have slowed considerably. Taylor, the forklift company, has seen its exports start to dwindle. "The European economy is so devastated," explains Taylor. A better exchange rate has given his European competitors a significant advantage, he complains.

Even businesses with relatively healthy orders are cautious. For example, the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers reports a relatively healthy April. However, spokeswoman Judy Viso says, "We will be watching June and July to see if our pattern of solid sales continues."

Inflation watch

The economic flux comes at a critical moment for the credit markets, says William Sullivan, senior vice president at Dean Witter Reynolds Inc. Bond market analysts are watching inflationary signs with a wary eye after a flare-up in the consumer and producer price indices in April. "If the economy starts to gain momentum, it would reinforce fears that the best news on inflation is behind us," says Mr. Sullivan.

Last week, the inflation fears kindled concern the Federal Reserve Board might raise interest rates. These concerns were heightened when Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan pointed to relatively robust auto sales in May and there were reports the Fed would have a "bias" toward higher short-term interest rates.

However, credit market watchers are not convinced that the Fed will really tighten up. "Other than auto sales there is not a lot of strength in consumer spending," Mr. Kasriel says.

With investors nervous about inflation, there has been a more intense scrutiny of President Clinton's fiscal management in Washington. Last week, Mr. Clinton won his first big battle over his plan to raise taxes and trim spending by about $350 billion over the next five years.

Many economists question the timing of the tax increases. "The portent of higher taxes has spooked consumers," says J. Patrick Bradley, chief economist at Provident National Bank in Philadelphia. Mark Melcher, an analyst with Prudential Securities in Washington says he thinks the tax hikes "can't be anything but disastrous for the economy."

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INTERNATIONAL

Guatemalans Struggle to Restore Democracy

By David Clark Scott
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

GUATEMALA CITY

TREES along Guatemala City's roads are sprouting black appendages. At night, they look like ghoulish scarecrows with boneless arms flapping in the breeze.

The black plastic ribbons tied to tree trunks are a sign of mourning. "Democracy has died here, and we want the people to know it," says José Eduardo Valdizan, spokesman for the National Advancement Party (PAN).

Guatemala enters a second week under a "temporary" dictatorship, with political, labor, business, and civilian organizations struggling to build opposition to President Jorge Serrano Elías.

On May 25, Mr. Serrano suspended democratic constitutional rule here by dissolving the Congress and Supreme Court. He also suspended some constitutional rights, including freedom of expression and assembly and freedom from arrest without warrant.

The coup has brought international condemnation and cutoffs of aid from the United States and some European nations.

But at home, Serrano has kept an iron grip on the media.

"We can't speak to the people. We can't get our message out on the radio. It is all censored. Our phone lines are cut. People only know what the government wants them to know," says human rights activist Amilcar Méndez.

Serrano is maintaining the upper hand. "He is not popular.... he is power-sick. But he is intelligent and is making some very savvy moves," says a political analyst who requests anonymity.

Serrano's moves

Appearing daily on national television, Serrano has announced a series of moves designed to win popular approval:

- Firing a congress and judiciary believed to be corrupt.
- Donating congressional salaries to local hospitals and backtracking on electricty rate hikes.
- Quickly installing a new President of the Supreme Court and new magistrates.
- In the name of "perfecting" Guatemalan democracy, calling for constitutional reforms to be approved by a national referendum within 90 days, including guidelines for congressional elections at a later date.
- Eliminating the positions of presidential spokesman, secretary of personal affairs, and the secretary of parliamentary affairs to reduce government spending.

Serrano's carefully constructed steps to restore Guatemala to a constitutional democracy are clearly designed to mitigate internal and external pressure.

But how long Serrano can maintain control of the situation is unclear. His latest plan for a referendum was flatly rejected as unconstitutional by Arturo Herbruger, the highly respected president of the government agency that oversees elections.

Secretary-General João Clemente Baena Soares of the Organization of American States arrived here Saturday heading a fact-finding mission. The results will be presented on June 3 in Washington.

Mr. Méndez is traveling to the US this week to lobby for sanctions against Guatemala. Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú plans a similar campaign abroad.

Although muted here, local opposition groups seem more united than ever. Leaders of Guatemala's most powerful business organization met with Ms. Menchú on May 27 to discuss the current crisis.

The value of Guatemala's currency, the quetzal, has taken a nose dive. The business community fears the loss of international credits and a cutoff in US trade preferences, which give some Guatemalan products duty-free access to the US market.

Guatemalan businessman Jorge Bris sharply condemns Serrano's coup. But as owner of a chain of warehouses here, he questions the use of economic sanctions. "How successful have US sanctions been in the past in other places? Have they delivered democracy to Cuba or Haiti, or have they served to polarize and increase poverty?"

Threat of military coup

But more than economic sanctions, Guatemalans fear an imminent military coup. Opposition leaders aren't advocating mass demonstrations against Serrano now. "A public confrontation would be an error," says Helen Mack, a human rights advocate. "It would give the Army an opportunity to come in all their glory to save the democracy."

Defense Minister José Domingo García insists the armed forces are completely united behind Serrano.

But one analyst in contact with Army officers says the younger officers, at the rank of Colonel and below, were "not happy with this situation. The top officers directly backing Serrano don't have a large following." But he adds the Army is waiting to see how the public reacts. "The military has a hot potato in its hands and doesn't know how to handle it. It's afraid of being the scapegoat, so it's keeping a low profile now."

The likely outcome, analysts say, is that Serrano pushes ahead with his plan, much as Alberto Fujimori in Peru has done. "The situation may fester for six months. People will get tired and give up the fight. Things will become 'normal' under Serrano's terms," says a political analyst.

There are other scenarios being discussed also.

Álvaro Arzu, secretary-general of the PAN and Serrano's former foreign minister, agrees the Guatemala congress and judiciary should be purged, but by constitutional mechanisms. He would like to see a transitional government installed until new elections can be held.

"Serrano's smart. But the reason we're in this situation is that he doesn't listen and he doesn't negotiate like most politicians. If he did, he'd be one of the most successful politicians in the world. But instead of making deals, Serrano fights," says one local political analyst.

Dr. Mario Castejón, a former member of congress, is circulating a proposal similar to the one outlined by Mr. Arzu. He suggests Mr. Herbruger of the Electoral Tribunal would make a good transitional president. But he also implies it is the Army's duty to show Serrano the door and implement the plan.

LUIS GALDAMEZ/REUTERS

CRACKDOWN: *Military police mobilized May 27 in Guatemala City to thwart a protest against President Serrano's seizure of power. Civil freedoms have been suspended.*

But Many Are Happy to See 'Corrupt' Congress Thrown Out

GUATEMALA CITY

BACKED by the chants of about 2,000 people calling for President Jorge Serrano Elías to resign, on May 27, Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú delivered a document to the National Palace demanding a return to democratic rule.

More than 60 civic, academic, religious, and labor union organizations had signed the document, said Ms. Menchú. But not all Guatemalans are united against the coup.

"Serrano's doing the right thing," says cab driver Mirador Flores. "The Congress is a bunch of thieves. The Supreme Court is corrupt. And the attorney general of human rights is too politically involved to be impartial. Finally, we have some law and order."

Similar comments are made by many lower and middle class Guatemalans interviewed. But some say Serrano himself should not be exempt from the purge. "I'm happy because we got rid of the 40 thieves. Now we just have Ali Baba left," said Carlos, who refused to be further identified.

It is not clear that Serrano's actions will reverse his own personal popularity decline. But the drop in common crime since the coup (attributed to heavy police and Army presence) and ousting the Congress and Supreme Court have touched a popular nerve. Perhaps because of media censorship, many do not know or do not care that they are living under a dictatorship now.

"If you took a national poll, I think you'd find the majority support his moves for reasons unrelated to the core of the constitutional problem. They are happy to see crime fall and the congress dissolved," says Mauricio Wurmser, a spokesman for Coordinator of Agricultural, Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations.

Fifty percent of Guatemalans are illiterate. Most get their information from radio or television, which have been censored.

Here, an unofficial poll of "about 150 people," done by the National Advancement Party (PAN) on May 28, showed that when asked about the events of the previous days, only 41 percent said a coup had occurred; 15 percent volunteered that the congress had been dissolved; 5 percent said there had been "a loss of democracy."

When asked if they considered Serrano capable of handling Guatemala's problems, 68 percent said no; 65 percent said they were not in agreement with Serrano's "attitude."

"He's no Alberto Fujimori. Fujimori walked among the people the day after his coup. Serrano could not do that. He sent in tanks and tear gas," says a political analyst.

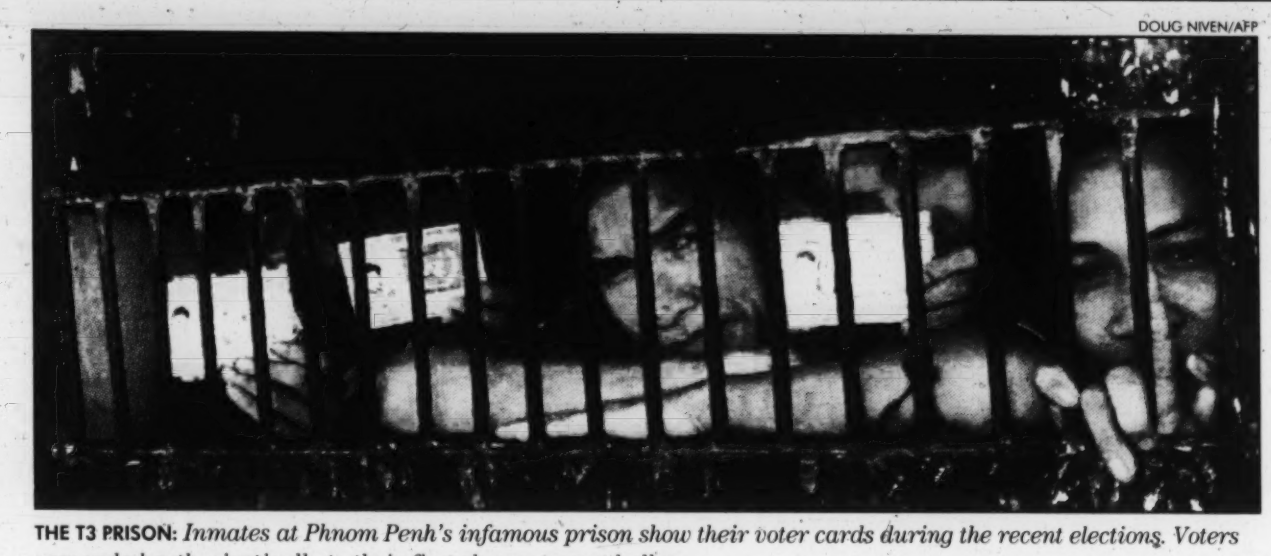
On May 27, Serrano was due to show up at the Supreme Court building to announce the new head of the court. Some 200 members of the court labor union waiting outside were dispersed by riot police.

If opposition leaders begin to be heard via the mass media, public support for Serrano's actions could dissolve. Miguel, a street vendor of jade jewelry, confidently praised Serrano's dismissal of Congress. But when told that evangelical strongman, Ret. Gen. Rios Montt has spoken out against it, Miguel's support for Serrano wavered.

"I don't think Serrano can keep control of the media much longer without causing more problems.... Soon, you will see opinions changing," predicts Álvaro Arzu, secretary-general of the PAN.

– D. C. S.

DOUG NIVEN/AFP



THE T3 PRISON: *Inmates at Phnom Penh's infamous prison show their voter cards during the recent elections. Voters responded enthusiastically to their first chance to cast ballots.*

Large Voter Turnout Bodes Well For Cambodians Tired of War

Khmer Rouge, now marginalized, poses threat to fragile gains

By Kathy Chenault
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA

CAMBODIANS waited eagerly as results from elections began to filter in yesterday for the new government that will try to bring lasting peace to the war-scarred nation.

Prospects looked a bit brighter here after the United Nations moved swiftly to declare the elections free and fair, clearing the way for recognition by other countries and enhancing Cambodia's chances of securing foreign aid for development and military assistance to counter a feared resurgence by the radical Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

The Khmer Rouge guerrillas, who pulled out of the UN-brokered peace accord for Cambodia and vowed to sabotage the elections, now will be treated as insurgents if they continue fighting, instead of being regarded as a political faction competing alongside other factions for more power and influence.

Despite pre-election threats by the Khmer Rouge, Cambodians demonstrated their desire to have their voices counted in shaping the country's future by going to the polls last week in surprisingly high numbers – 4.2 million of the country's 4.7 million registered voters turned out.

Rebuke to Khmer Rouge

Yasushi Akushi, UN special representative in Cambodia, said Saturday that the 89 percent of the country's registered voters who cast ballots "did so without fear in an atmosphere of calm that was almost completely free of violence and intimidation." In an obvious reference to the Khmer Rouge, Mr. Akashi said the large turnout "delivered a stinging rebuke to the men of violence."

Nevertheless, some peacekeepers were wary of the guerrillas' silence: "I suspect they're going to do something again," said Maj. Roustan Saliakhov, a Russian officer serving with the UN peacekeeping force in the northern province of Seam Reap. "It has been alarmingly quiet."

The election was the centerpiece of the UN peace plan aimed at ending decades of turmoil in Cambodia and offered a key test to determine how deeply involved the UN is likely to be in helping to resolve internal conflicts elsewhere.

The ambitious $2 billion peace and reconstruction mission for Cambodia is the UN's largest such operation in history.

Piecemeal results available yesterday showed strong support for both the royalist opposition party, the United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful, and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC) and the party of the Vietnamese-installed government, the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). Eighteen other parties also competed.

Although the United Nations moved quickly to declare the elections fair, there were concerns that some parties might protest the vote if the results were not favorable to them. The CPP yesterday appeared ready to do just that.

Sok An, deputy party chief, said serious irregularities occurred during the voting and asked officials with the UN mission in Cambodia to stop releasing election results until the party's complaints were investigated.

He claimed that seals were broken on some ballot boxes, ink used to mark the hands of people who voted could be washed off, and some Cambodian poll workers were not impartial. The party also complained that it did not have access to the ballot boxes at night during the elections to ensure no one tampered with them.

International observers privately expressed concerns that the CPP leadership might react strongly if the party failed to gain control of the new assembly.

The party leadership could create chaos if it protested the election results by refusing to cooperate with the new government and disbanding security forces.

The United Nations pace plan had appeared on the verge of collapse before the election and still faces trouble because of the earlier failure to disarm the combatants.

Run out

As the voting was winding down, Nem Lan stuffed clothes into a small bag, strapped some belongings to her bicycle and left home with her two young daughters after hearing of an attack by the Khmer Rouge in a nearby village in the tense northern province of Siem Reap.

She and about 340 other villagers laden with a few essentials and cherished possessions made their way slowly by bicycle along the highway, choosing the burden of relocation in stifling heat over feared attack at home by the Khmer Rouge.

Nem Lan said that about 100 of the 300 people living in her village of Komphen headed for the provincial capital of Siem Reap, about 10 miles to the east.

She said she had not been afraid to vote even though the Khmer Rouge had threatened to attack those who went to the polls.

She felt secure because of the presence of UN peacekeepers, but now she is scared again, she said. "After the election, maybe the Khmer Rouge will attack."

A taxi driver in Siem Reap, the site of a bold daylight raid by hundreds of Khmer Rouge in early May, expressed similar fears.

"I don't worry as long as UNTAC is here," said Bun Roeun, using the acronym of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia. "But if UNTAC withdraws, then I will worry."

· EUROPE UPDATE ·

Poland's Premier, Reform May Get Second Chance

THE Polish parliament, whose dissolution was announced by President Lech Walesa Saturday, today will consider granting special powers to Polish Prime Minister Hanna Suchocka.

The powers would allow her to continue with economic reforms in the interim period between the parliament's dismissal and new elections, expected within the next four months.

If the parliament does not grant the powers, as is speculated, the government will be virtually blocked until the new elections.

After Prime Minister Suchocka lost a vote of confidence in the Sejm (the lower house of parliament) by one vote on May 28, President Walesa refused to accept her resignation. He instead opted to dismiss the parliament and call for early parliamentary elections.

The actual dismissal will take effect when his decision is printed in the government's legal bulletin in a few days. Elections must take place within four months from the date of printing.

The Sejm, a bickering collection of more than 20 political parties, has been nearly unmanageable since its election in October 1991.

A new election law, expected to be signed soon by Walesa, would require a party to garner 5 percent of the vote in order to enter parliament. It is hoped that this threshold will eliminate many of the fringe parties in the new election and result in a more manageable parliament.

The Sejm withdrew its support for Suchocka May 28 on a motion introduced by the Solidarity trade union and backed by the former communist and nationalist parties on the right. Solidarity argues that reforms are being carried out in a way that is too harmful for the average Pole and has demanded pay increases for striking teachers and health workers.

Suchocka refused to grant the increases, instead sticking to a strict federal budget worked out with the International Monetary Fund. While conditions are indeed hard for many Poles, the Polish economy has begun to climb out from recession.

Now that Suchocka has agreed to stay on as interim prime minister, and Solidarity sees it is faced with the same negotiating partner, the trade union is again threatening a nationwide general strike to force the government to increase wages.

Turks Protest Arson Attack

Groups of mainly Turkish demonstrators clashed with baton-wielding German police during the night in Solingen, Germany, where five Turks died in an arson attack blamed on neo-Nazis, NRW radio said yesterday.

The private radio station said tension remained high through the early hours in the town, where three girls aged 13, nine, and four, and two women aged 27 and 18, were killed when their house was set afire early May 29.

Reporters on the scene said police used batons against groups of demonstrators, some of whom were carrying clubs. Some of the protesters were arrested.

NRW said police had called for reinforcements and bus services had been halted after demonstrators attacked a vehicle.

Police in the town of Wuppertal, Germany, responsible for Solingen, said they would issue a statement on the events soon but would not comment immediately.

Witnesses said a large bonfire set up on a central road crossing in the town continued to burn in the darkness and some demonstrators drove through the city waving flags from car windows.

About 5,000 protesters, mostly Turks, marched through Solingen yesterday in response to the attack, which resembled the firebomb murder six months ago of three Turkish women in a house in Mölln near Lübeck, for which two "skinheads" are now on trial.

Police arrested Germans during yesterday's march after drink cans were thrown from a house overlooking the demonstration, further angering the protesters.

■ *Compiled from reports by Francine S. Kiefer in Bonn and Reuters in Solingen, Germany.*

CONTAINMENT IN ASIA

US Aims With Talks To Keep N. Koreans In Nuclear Arms Pact

By Clayton Jones
Staff writer of the Christian Science Monitor

TOKYO

IN talks in New York tomorrow, the United States will make a last-ditch effort to keep North Korea from bolting the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and perhaps building a nuclear bomb of its own.

The US agreement to the talks is a concession, and a signal that Washington may be ready to meet demands by the North, such as putting a stop to US-South Korean military exercises.

The talks come just 10 days before the North can officially withdraw from the treaty, having given the requisite three-months notice on March 12. Both sides have hinted they are ready to makes compromises, but the US says the talks will be limited to two points included in a resolution passed by the United Nations Security Council on May 12.

That resolution, which passed 13-0 with China and Pakistan abstaining, demands that Pyongyang reconsider its decision to drop out of the NPT and accept inspections requested by the treaty's implementor, the International Atomic Energy Agency.

North Korea announced its withdrawal after the IAEA demanded a "special" inspection of two sites that the agency suspects contain evidence that Pyongyang has produced far more plutonium than it has reported. The IAEA's request was based in part on evidence from US intelligence.

In the talks tomorrow, the US wants to give the appearance that it is negotiating under UN approval in case the North does finally withdraw from the NPT. In that case, the US could more easily obtain Security Council approval for economic sanctions against North Korea, South Korean officials argue.

But China, which provides North Korea with about three-quarters of its oil, has warned the US that it would not support UN sanctions against its communist ally in Pyongyang.

Last week, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen while on a visit to Seoul told South Korean officials that China has very little leverage with Pyongyang, despite the North's economic dependence on China. "We oppose pressure," said Mr. Qian, whose trip to Seoul was seen as disapproval of any attempt by the North to manufacture a nuclear bomb. The US has also tried to narrow the scope of the talks to nuclear and military issues by sending Robert Gallucci, the assistant secretary of state for political and military affairs, as chief negotiator.

IN testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. Gallucci hinted at possible US concessions to North Korea's concerns about the US military presence in South Korea. "What we're prepared to do is to address concerns that we regard as legitimate security concerns that they have raised to date," he said.

The US, eager to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, is concerned that North Korea would set a precedent by being the first nation to withdraw from the NPT.

If Pyongyang does stay within the NPT, says one South Korean official, then it may be using its threat of withdrawal merely as a way to convince Japan that it should quickly improve relations.

"The North Korean economy is so close to collapse that it desperately needs Japanese aid and investment," he said. "But the Japanese won't move unless Washington does."

Because China is opposed to sanctions, it has urged both the US and South Korea to talk directly to Pyongyang. As result, South Korea proposed last month to reopen talks with the North.

The two sides already signed a set of wide-ranging peace pacts between their prime ministers last year, but the pacts have not been implemented. The North has since proposed that each nation's minister of "unification," rather than their prime ministers, open talks.

But Seoul officials worry that the North may want just to set up a whole new set of negotiations as way to avoid past agreements.

ECONOMY

The French government intends to permanently turn the page on an industrial policy of nationalization

Privatization in France Loses Ideological Flavor

By Eduardo Cué
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

PARIS

THE lack of any ideological debate following the new conservative government's announcement last week that 21 major state-controlled companies would be privatized, symbolizes the profound changes in French society over the past decade and confirms that the success of the program will depend on financial rather than political considerations.

The government of Prime Minister Édouard Balladur, which came to power two months ago following the crushing defeat of the Socialist Party in legislative elections, said it would sell companies, including the famous automobile manufacturer Renault, the chemical giant Rhône-Poulenc Inc., and the national airline Air France for an estimated $54 billion.

"It is an ambitious program to build a modern and solid economy," Finance Minister Edmond Alphandéry declared.

Although all 21 companies or groups will not be privatized for several years, the government hopes to sell Banque Nationale de Paris, the oil company Elf Aquitaine, the chemical maker Rhône-Poulenc, and the insurance firms Assurances Generales de France and Union des Assurances de Paris before the end of the year for about $7 billion.

While the success of the program is likely to depend on the state of the international economy in the coming months, the project marks a major break with the long-established French tradition of a strong central state playing a leading role in all aspects of the country's political, social, and economic life.

President François Mitterrand expressed reservations when the plan was presented to the Council of Ministers last week, but his comments were milder in tone and content than seven years ago, when he virulently opposed the first privatization scheme carried out by the government of Prime Minister Jacques Chirac.

Last week Mr. Mitterrand, whose powers have been greatly reduced by the Socialist defeat, said only that he thought the list of companies to be privatized was a bit long and that groups vital to the country's security should remain in government hands. The president was referring specifically to Aérospatiale, the builder of the Ariane launcher.

For its part, the Socialist Party issued a statement charging that "the government remains prisoner of a dogmatic vision that systematically denies it any role in the economic and financial management of companies."

Europe's recession and the depressed state of the Paris stock market will make privatization more difficult than it was between 1986 and 1988.

But while the government's political problems are negligible and its majority in the National Assembly assures easy passage of the new law, Europe's current economic recession and the depressed state of the Paris stock market are certain to make privatization more difficult than it was between 1986 and 1988. At that time, the Chirac government sold 11 groups, including the leading television network TF-1 and the financial companies Suez and Paribas.

Analysts say that given the current crisis in the real estate market, leading French insurers and bankers are no longer willing or able to invest the large amounts of money necessary to become part of the so-called stable core of shareholders. At the same time, individual French investors have largely lost their appetite for buying shares as a result of the stock market crash in 1987 and savings plans that were yielding more than 10 percent until a recent drop in interest rates.

In 1987, France counted 10 million small shareholders, but since then the number has consistently declined to between 4 million and 6 million, according to most estimates. Suez, for instance, has lost 3 million of its original 3.8 million small shareholders at the time of its privatization.

The government is counting on foreign investors to buy significant portions of the companies to be put on the market during the next two to three years. To that end, it has abolished the 20 percent limit imposed in 1986 on the number of shares foreigners may acquire in any one firm.

Nevertheless, the government is not expected to allow foreign interests to control the core of shareholders that will insure the stability of the newly privatized firms. The core group will be chosen by an independent commission.

The conservative government has also decided to hold a golden share, allowing it to limit the participation that any one group or individual, foreign or French, may have in a privatized company. The finance ministry also will have to expressly authorize the acquisition of more than 5 percent in enterprises in the key sectors of health, national security, and defense.

In deciding on such a vast program of privatization, the government intends to permanently turn the page on an industrial policy of nationalization that began with the Popular Front in the 1930s, continued with DeGaulle after World War II, and culminated with Mitterand in 1982.

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Gold Fades as Monetary Reserve for Nations

Its price has been rising, but experts say that floating exchange rates make central bank holdings irrelevant

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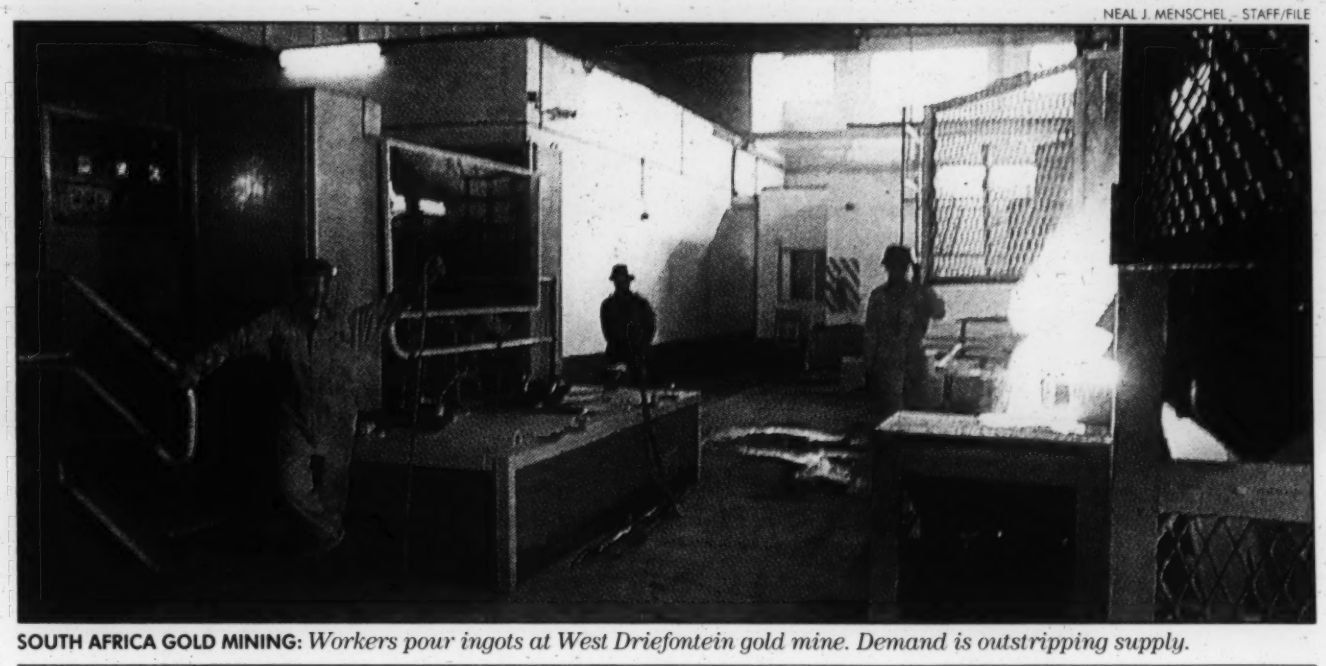

SOUTH AFRICA GOLD MINING: *Workers pour ingots at West Driefontein gold mine. Demand is outstripping supply.*

By Guy Halverson
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

NEW YORK

GOLD – the financial outcast of the 1980s – is suddenly glittering again on world markets.

Its new luster reflects a rising demand for gold jewelry, stepped up industrial use, and a surge in gold purchases as a hedge against the possibility of more rapid inflation.

But can gold regain its former preeminence as a commodity of international exchange? Do not count on it, experts say.

"I haven't heard of any bars of gold being moved around in international monetary transactions for 15 or 20 years now," says an official of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

Billions of dollars of gold bullion are stored in a massive vault the size of half a football field five stories under the bank in lower Manhattan [See box].

Before industrial nations went off the gold standard in the early 1930s, gold was used by central banks to provide monetary backing for paper currencies and to settle financial transactions between nations. Under the gold standard, each unit of currency, such as the United States dollar, would be linked to a fixed weight of gold.

The US and most other major industrial countries went off the gold standard in 1933. But in the period after World War II, a modified form of the gold exchange system was reintroduced. When a foreign government, as a result of an international payments surplus, piled up more dollar reserves than it wanted, it could ask the US to provide gold instead. Faced with repeated demands for gold, the US began refusing such requests in the late 1960s.

The final break between gold and paper currency occurred in the early 1970s, when President Nixon let the US dollar "float" in value on foreign exchange markets. In 1975, President Ford removed the 1930s ban on American citizens owning gold.

Banking with gold

The US and other nations still hold billions of dollars of bullion – somewhere around 35,000 tons worldwide – in their international monetary reserves. But gold is not expected to play a major role in central bank transactions anytime in the near future, experts say.

"Gold reserves by central banks serve no functional monetary purpose today," says Peter Kenen, a professor of economics and international finance at Princeton University. "Most governments now hold gold more for prestige than for anything else."

"Goverments like to have the gold as a sort of war chest," says John Williamson, a senior fellow with the Institute for International Economics in Washington. "They think that selling the gold would be a loss of faith." In today's world of floating exchange rates, central bank gold holdings are "totally irrelevant," he adds.

In recent years a number of governments, including the former Soviet Union, as well as the Netherlands and Belgium, have sold off gold – which pays no interest – to raise cash for investment. Last year central banks, including the latter two, sold an estimated 17 million ounces of gold. Those sales have helped to offset declining gold production by mines – while also holding down prices.

Gold's devotees

Despite the increasing official indifference to gold by central bankers, the commodity has many devotees. "Gold bugs" have helped boost the price of the commodity. So far this year, gold has moved from slightly under $330 an ounce to its current range of around $380 an ounce.

Gold prices especially rose in late April, when the investment community heard that global investor George Soros, who controls Soros Fund Management, had bought 6.8 million shares of Newmont Mining Corporation. Suddenly, some investors were saying: "If George Soros is buying, something must be up with gold."

Prices for platinum and silver have also been edging upward. Gold mining stocks have in some cases climbed 50 percent in 1993. Part of the reason is speculative, says George Milling-Stanley, a bullion expert with Lehman Brothers. But the basic demand for gold is outpacing supply, he notes. Mr. Milling-Stanley believes that gold could hit a high of around $500 this year. But it will not remain at that level, ending up trading at a far lower price, he says.

Gold's all time high occurred on Jan. 21, 1980, when it sold at $875 an ounce. Speculators were buying the metal to hedge against double-inflation and soaring energy costs. During the 1980s, with relatively low interest rates and intense stock market speculation, gold plummeted in value, reaching a low of $282 an ounce in 1985.

There have been two "bear market" rallies for gold since then. The commodity rose 71 percent to $510 an ounce in January 1983 from a low of $298 in June 1982; and it climbed 69.5 percent to $502 in December 1987 from $282 in 1985.

Vahid Fathi, a metals expert with Kemper Securities Inc., predicts gold in the current rally will reach at least $425 an ounce by February 1994. But based on the pattern of the 1980s, it is not inconceivable that gold could climb as much as 70 percent, to the $550 range by late 1994 or 1995, Mr. Fathi says.

Despite the current upward momentum in bullion prices, Fathi holds that gold mining stocks could experience a modest correction of at least 15 percent.

Ironically, according to gold experts, bullion's recent surge is not linked to any specific set of political uncertainties or crises, such as the conflict in Bosnia. In the past, gold has often risen in price during times of political turmoil. What is now driving the market is rising nonspeculative demand.

Last year, gold supply was estimated at around 2,200 metric tons. But consumption was 2,900 metric tons. The difference was made up in part by sales of gold by central banks. This year, demand is again expected to outstrip the supply of new gold, with some additional sales by central banks helping to meet demand.

Further, gold mine output is declining in some major producing nations, such as South Africa and the US.

"Asians, particularly the Chinese, have become eager purchasers," says Michael Brown, an official of the Gold and Silver Institute in Washington. In China, alternative investments are limited. Though there are stock markets, they are tiny compared with the major stock markets of Western nations. Inflation is a serious problem in China. Thus, many Chinese consider gold a good investment.

The dollar's recent weakness has also driven some overseas investors into gold, since its price usually moves in inverse relation to the US currency.

Fathi of Kemper Securities figures that the upward movement of gold hints at higher inflation in 1994. "We may have seen the best news on inflation behind us," he says. "Gold tends to react months – and sometimes a year or so – ahead of actual inflationary advances."

Below Sea Level, US Stands Guard on Gold

NEW YORK

'WE'VE never had a pile tumble over," says "Bill," pointing to a massive stack of metallic gold bars stacked 10 feet high.

Bill is the gatekeeper for the underground gold storage vault of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, where the United States maintains massive gold reserves. It is one of the world's most secure safe-deposit vaults. Some 80 central banks and international monetary organizations store gold here. The gold has a market value of about $120 billion.

Nations used to physically shift the gold bars between piles when a country owed another some money. But that no longer happens, Bill says. Now the gold is usually removed and converted into cash. The bank provides free storage; the only service charge is when bars are moved. Cost? $1.75 a bar.

The vault is 80 feet below sea level on the bedrock of Manhattan Island. Just to get into the vault requires walking through a maze right out of an Indiana Jones movie. The passageway is cut through a specially balanced nine-foot tall, 90-ton steel cylinder that revolves vertically in a steel and concrete frame weighing 140-tons.

Bill hands me a 27-pound gold bar. It has a market value in excess of $150,000. Was one ever lost? Bill says no. But he remembers a story he heard about a moving man for an overseas central bank who supposedly used one as a doorstop – and then drove away. The central bank found the "doorstop" months later, still next to the door, which suggests that most people might not recognize a 27-pound, $150,000-plus gold bar if they found one.

– G. H.

HABITAT

MARK LANG/WILDLIGHT

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Will Road-Paving Spoil Australia's Rain

By Catherine Foster
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

DAINTREE RAIN FOREST, AUSTRALIA

TO get to the Daintree rain forest, you drive north from the metropolis of Cairns, pass through miles of sugar-cane fields, take a ferry across a river, and then bounce along a rutted one-lane road.

The Cape Tribulation Road is a jarring trip at times, but disturbingly short: A mere two hours separates steamy city and the only tropical rain forest in a developed country. And the trip is about to become easier.

The Daintree, a narrow 30-mile coastal sliver between two rivers, is a popular site for tourists who want to visit both the Great Barrier Reef and the tropical rain forest on the same trip. It's a beautiful area, with essentially the same unspoiled beaches and dense jungles of ancient plant species that Captain Cook saw in 1770.

The Daintree is a small portion of the 5,400-square-mile lowland coastal rain forest that since 1988 has been protected by listing as one of 100 United Nations World Heritage sites. As signatory to the World Heritage Convention, Australia has agreed to protect, conserve, and rehabilitate the area for future generations.

But many people are concerned about the effects of encroaching civilization on its pristine status. Sitting in the middle of the protected rain-forest area is a 1,080-acre subdivision. The impact of development on the protected area has people worried.

Landowners, environmentalists, developers, tourist organizations, and regulatory bodies are trying to negotiate their competing interests.

Most of the 1,100 subdivision lots have not been built on, because owners are waiting for electric power connections. Only about 600 people live in the Daintree. Tourist flow is still light, because the one resort hotel and a handful of motels and backpacker hostels built on the subdivided land are powered by generators and provide only a small number of accommodations.

The sealing (paving) of the Cape Tribulation Road is also a concern. The state of Queensland's $6.8 million sealing project for the 21-mile road began five months ago. The sealed road will open up traffic to any car, not just four-wheel-drive vehicles. The road should be finished in 18 months to two years.

Peter MacPherson, who with his wife, Pat, runs the Daintree Heritage Lodge, one of the tourist accommodations built on the subdivided land, says he's of two minds about sealing the road.

"From a business point of view, the road will bring more business," he says. "But will it, at the same time, wreck that which people are coming to see?"

The area was virtually uninhabited until a developer and member of the local Douglas Shire (county) Council, George Quaid, applied for a subdivision permit in the early 1980s. The council denied his application, but the pro-business Queensland state government overrode the objections.

Some people who bought the land, ironically, were drawn to it in 1983 by publicity generated by environmental activists who, protesting the building of the Bloomfield Track road that went straight through the rain forest, chained themselves to trees and buried themselves in sand in front of bulldozers. Seeing pictures on television of this unspoiled wilderness, would-be landowners were beckoned by realtors to "get your piece of the Daintree."

After they bought their land, however, purchasers found themselves in the thick of controversy, and the electricity that had been promised to them by real-estate agents is still not available 10 years later.

Electricity is being held up by the Douglas Shire Council and the Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA), a regulatory body set up by federal and Queensland governments to manage the area.

Bill Hinton, as an agent of Mr. Quaid, was one of those who promised electricity. Today, he and his wife live and work on their piece of the rain forest. They run the Floravilla Art Gallery in the Daintree. Mr. Hinton loves the unique botanical features of the rain forest: He and his wife are producing a book about the ancient flowering plants in the forest.

But Hinton wants to build a house and garden on his land. "People have got this strange idea that the whole of the rain forest is controlled by landowners," he says. "The freehold land represents less than one-half of a percent of the adjoining national park and listed area. So the Daintree can't be ruined."

Hinton wants to see electricity brought in and the subdivision run like a small town. But the thought of a large-scale rural residential settlement next to the rain forest worries others. Development brings problems of increased traffic, generator noise, sewage, and garbage disposal, they say.

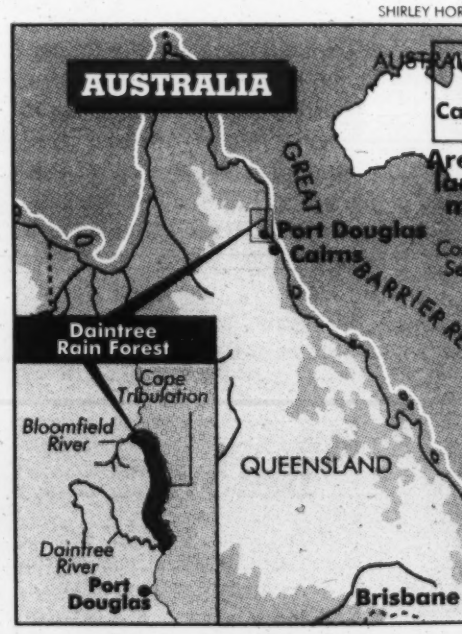
The risk is "the impact of just being there," says Andrew McKenzie, spokesman for the WTMA.

While environmentalists say the real reason not to develop is the Daintree's botanical uniquenes
they argue the case in terms of ec
nomics.

Andrew Small, an ecologist wh
manages the Daintree Rainfore
Environmental Centre, says, "A l
of people from the United State
and Europe come here because it
been advertised as unspoiled. A su
vey showed that in 1991-9
230,000 [visitors] came to th
Daintree. In 1980-81, less tha
20,000 came.

"[Tourism] is worth $76 millio
a year now. Estimates are th

SHIRLEY HOR



400,000 people a year will be vis
ing by the year 2000 and bringi
in $200 million a year. Just by t
forest standing here," Mr. Sm
says.

Some would like to see the sub
vision land repurchased from t
owners. "Nobody would mind th
if they paid market prices," Hint
says. "We mustn't cheat the pe
ple."

The WTMA is buying up sm
parcels of land that owners want
sell, but its funding is slim. T
state government is doing the sa
thing, as is a private foundation, t

Daintree Jungle Shelters Unusual Species

DAINTREE RAIN FOREST, AUSTRALIA

A SLOGGY walk through the Daintree rain forest is an instant education in how unique and vital it is. It is widely regarded as the oldest continuously surviving rain forest.

More than 110 million years ago, the Daintree escaped smothering volcanic ash, so species remained, giving it a high diversity of animal life.

The Daintree is home to 60 percent of Australia's bat species. Of 19 primitive flowering plants in the world, 13 are here. It has some of the slowest-growing species in the world, including the fan palm, and some of the oldest, including cycads and the King fern, estimated to be 240 million years old.

In its tangled canopies can be found animals not seen anywhere else: the Daintree River ring-tail possum, Bennett's tree kangaroo, and the red-eyed tree frog. The cassowary, a bird with a brilliant blue neck and head, not only is beautiful, but 180 plant species also depend on it.

"If we lose the bird, we lose the species relying on it," says Andrew Small, manager of the Daintree Rainforest Environmental Centre. "It's a pyramid. While it's protected, [the cassowary] is still shot, and dogs eat the eggs. One third of the island species are gone."

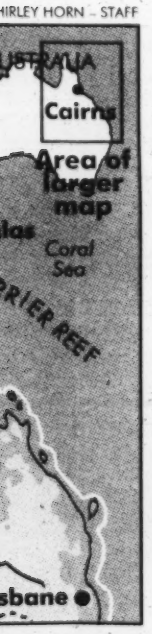
– C. F.

GREEN CANOPY: *Considered the oldest continuously surviving rain forest in the world, the Daintree is a narrow 30-mile strip along the Great Barrier Reef in Australia.*

in Forest?

queness, s of eco- gist who inforest s, "A lot d States ause it's d. A sur- 991-92, to the ss than 5 million re that be visit- bringing t by the r. Small he subdi- rom the ind that, " Hinton the peo- up small s want to im. The the same ation, the

SHIRLEY HORN – STAFF



Daintree Rainforest Foundation.

Environmentalists say Quaid's development would never go through today, because the Douglas Shire Council and the Queensland government are now much more environmentally oriented.

Mike Berwick used to be the spokesman for the protesters opposing the building of the road. Then he was against the Douglas Shire Council, which built the road. Today, he's the head of it. Keeping everybody happy is tough, he says.

"[The area] should be national park, but it's not," he says. "We're having to make sacrifices, like putting power in. If you end up with a hostile population it won't work. We have to work with landowners to make it work."

The council is developing a seven-year central plan that will allow no further subdivision and no further tourist accommodations to be built. Environmentalists would like to see the council go further and issue tree protection or vegetation protection orders to landowners.

"We've taken a different view," Mr. Berwick says. "We're taking an educational, cooperative approach. We're about to start a vegetation audit, writing to all landowners, asking if we can come on their land. We'll map all that we find on computers and tell owners what they've got. We're hoping that will raise awareness."

The council is also doing a survey of landowners' plans for their property. "In reality you have people who have the right to build a house under the law," Berwick says. "We don't know what their aspirations are. Do they want to keep [their land], sell it, leave it undisturbed, build on it? The responses are starting to come in. But until you know that, it's hard to plan if you want to plan cooperatively."

These Plants Want to Be in Shade

Hostas, common in Japanese gardens, are catching on – in many varieties – in the US

By Leslie Albrecht Popiel
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

NORTH TEWKSBURY, MASS.

AT Meadowbrook Hosta Farm, Jay Gilbert breeds gold and blue "babies" in the basement. This hosta enthusiast has been growing the popular shade plant for seven years at his home here. "You really have to love it," Mr. Gilbert says – and apparently he does: He already has hundreds of varieties and is still dreaming up more. Gilbert spent a rainy day this spring scouring the dictionary for names for his new seedlings.

At his home in North Tewksbury, Mass., recently, Gilbert proudly showed off his babies, most with only a couple of tender leaves. The lower level of Gilbert's home has been converted to a small greenhouse and tissue-culture lab, where he controls light, temperature, and moisture for hundreds of hostas in various stages of development. Outdoors, his established hostas were just beginning to poke through the soggy earth.

Native to Japan, hostas are mounded, green, leafy plants that have become increasingly popular in the United States, especially over the last decade. Hostas provide an attractive option for shade gardening – most hostas grow best out of direct sunlight. The plants are relatively pest-free, requiring little or no spraying. In fact, the best care for these gems is almost no care at all, especially in mild climates with rich organic soil. Established hostas are full and lush, and do well as edging and fillers. In Japanese gardens, hostas are often feature plants, an idea catching on in the US.

The American Hosta Society has more than 2,000 members – up from 800 in 1987. "Hostas have become popular because of changes in society – lifestyles have changed," says Robert Olson, president of the society. He suggests that many people do not have time to tend complicated plants.

ROBERT OLSON

LEAFY VARIETY: *Low-maintenance hostas come in many shapes and colors, such as 'Krossa Regal' (above left) and 'Golden Tiara' (below).*

Unlike roses, he says, hostas do not require constant attention, and are virtually indestructible. In recent years, he notes, "Color and variety have increased immensely."

As they are developed, hostas are being offered in more varied combinations of color, size, and shape. Beyond the standard plants most retailers carry, however, hostas are difficult to find.

Hosta enthusiasts find that the best way to obtain new plants is either by mail order or through networking with other gardeners, rather than scouring greenhouses.

"Greenhouses only carry a green, a blue, and a yellow [hosta]. It's becoming a mail-order business," says Gilbert, who now sells hostas through a catalog. This year, Gilbert's catalog will list more than 200 varieties at an average price of $25 to $30. He also sells a tissue-culture kit for customers who want to breed new varieties. Within the next few years, he hopes to have 40 to 50 new kinds of hosta available.

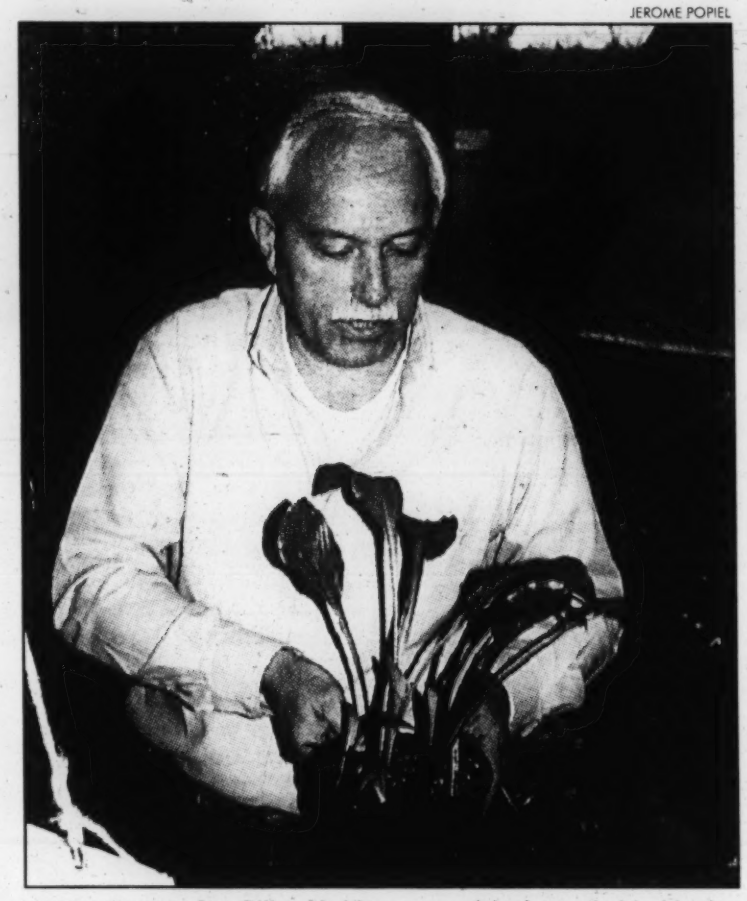
Development of a new hosta is a lengthy process: six months to a year for seeds to sprout, and another five years of waiting to ensure that the plant stays "true." An immature plant may not represent how the plant will look when fully grown. And for Gilbert, it's difficult to throw away hostas that haven't turned out, even though he already has 400 to 500 hostas in his garden.

Variety is one of the main attractions for hosta growers. Plants range from tiny mounds only a few inches high, such as "Venusta," to sprawling giants like "Sum and Substance," which may grow to 6 feet in width. Colors range from lime green – almost fluorescent – to gorgeous deep blue-greens. Combined with an an unusual leaf – cupped, pointed, or heart-shaped – the effect can be stunning.

The search for new hostas can be exhausting. There are more than 1,000 registered varieties, Olson says. Perhaps another 500 to 1,000 varieties are unregistered.

But hosta lovers enjoy the challenge of finding new plants. Local gardener William Burto says, "Once you get started, you don't stop until you get a yardful." Ten years ago, Mr. Burto began growing hostas in his small city garden in Cambridge, Mass., and later expanded to his neighbor's yard. Two hundred varieties later, Burto says he enjoys the variety of leaves. In addition, "They are extremely easy to grow and thrive in New England."

JEROME POPIEL



HOSTAS GALORE: *Jay Gilbert holds up one of the hosta 'babies' he is breeding at his home in North Tewksbury, Mass. Mr. Gilbert has developed hundreds of new varieties of the popular shade plants.*

Although hostas are primarily known for their foliage, they do produce white, purple, lavender, and pinkish flowers – some quite fragrant. Currently, variegated varieties, as well as new red-stemmed plants, are favorites. But the bestseller is probably "Frances Williams," an old standby that has crinkled green leaves with yellow margins and a white flower.

A BASIC starter set of hostas can be inexpensive, with young plants priced at about $4 to $10 each. The more uncommon, mature, or new varieties can make the hosta habit costly, however: At a recent American Hosta Society convention Gilbert attended, a single hosta plant was auctioned for $975.

Gilbert is eager to share his enjoyment of hosta gardening: "The fun is in planting seeds and getting something new ... there aren't any secrets." He even sent this reporter home with two plants, a "Golden Tiara" and a tiny blue-green still in the experimental phase. "If it turns out to be something, you can name it!" Gilbert said.

■ *For further information, write:*

American Hosta Society
7802 NE 63nd Street
Vancouver, WA 98662

New England Hosta Society
46 Bartlett Street
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Meadowbrook Hosta Farm
81 Meredith Road
North Tewksbury, MA 01876

WORTH NOTING ON TV

By Alan Bunce

■ **TUESDAY**

Advise and Consent: the Selection of the Supreme Court Justices *(C-Span, 4:30-6 p.m.)*: Series of panels dealing with the selection process, its history and recent changes.

■ **WEDNESDAY**

Zoo *(PBS, 9-11 p.m.)*: In a media world replete with reality-based programs whose "reality" is ambiguous at best, it's always a pleasure to note an upcoming Frederick Wiseman documentary – especially this time, since "Zoo" is his 25th. He remains perhaps the leading filmmaker in this genre – as innumerable international awards, retrospectives of his work, and admiring critiques testify. A serious-minded and enormously insightful artist with a sense of humor, he has a finger on the day-to-day lives of Americans, especially those living in an organizational context.

Sometimes it's animals he deals with. That happened in his 1974 film "Primate." Like several of his notable films, it caused a furor over its depiction of how animals are treated in experimental laboratories. In this case, the tone is more pleasant – though far from totally so (some of it is gory) – as viewers follow the daily lives of the denizens of Miami's famed Metrozoo, one of the nation's best and biggest, with some 140 species inhabiting a 290-acre area.

As revealed in this film, their existence is more orchestrated by the kindly staff than may be obvious to visitors, who feel they're seeing creatures living free in a nature-like habitat. Humans are viewed with the same acute eye, including the staff and the visitors.

As always with Wiseman films, there is no narration. He tells the story in clips, culled and edited from huge amounts of raw footage. What emerges is a complex picture of human (and animal) nature created from seemingly simple small pieces. He once told me he recognizes that although the unnarrated clips make his films seem clinical, they are actually subjective visions of the subjects. But they are free of the re-creations so rampant in today's "documentaries" and is also happily free of commentary.

Please check local listings, especially for the PBS program.

LEARNING

From the Barrio to the Laboratory

Four Hispanic students at MIT are a long way from their high school on the Texas border

ROBERT HARBISON – STAFF

CLASSMATES: *MIT students (l. to r.) Enrique Arzaga, David Villarreal, and Albert Martinez – three of the four Hispanic students from an El Paso, Texas, high school – discuss their first year at the Massachusetts university.*

By Laurel Shaper Walters
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

ALBERT MARTINEZ had never even heard of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) until he was a junior in high school back in El Paso, Texas.

Now the 17-year-old Mexican citizen is completing his first year at MIT along with three Mexican-American classmates from his high school. He is the first person in his family to attend college.

When five students from El Paso's Ysleta High School were accepted to MIT last year, it made national news.

MIT had never accepted so many students from one public school. Furthermore, Ysleta is a poor school near the Mexican border with a 95 percent Hispanic population. Only 30 percent of its graduates attend college.

"We didn't even have AP [advanced placement] courses at our school for math and science," Mr. Martinez says. "Almost everybody else [here at MIT] came from [public] magnet schools or private schools."

Nationwide, only 18 percent of college-age Hispanics are enrolled in four-year colleges, compared with 34 percent of whites and 24 percent of blacks, according to the American Council on Education in Washington. The high school dropout rate for Hispanics, at more than 35 percent, is higher than those for other ethnic groups.

DURING the past several years, many colleges have intensified their efforts to attract Hispanic students through increased scholarships, aggressive recruiting, and improved support services.

John Blackburn, dean of admissions at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, says his university is now taking the same approach to recruiting Hispanics as it did to recruiting blacks in the 1970s and 1980s. All Hispanics offered admission to the university receive personalized letters from current Hispanic students. Once they enroll, students can find support through a student group, La Sociedad Hispanics.

Many schools have hired Hispanic recruitment officers to make trips to the West and Southwest. They often go into Latino families' homes and make a more favorable impact if they speak Spanish and understand cultural differences.

At the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, Assistant Director of Admissions Maria Llopiz greets callers with a voice-mail message in Spanish. Ms. Llopiz is working with local Hispanic groups to identify applicants for the school's four new full-tuition scholarships.

Yet recruitment and retention of Hispanic students at colleges nationwide has been only partly successful. Cultural and economic barriers persist.

Many Hispanic parents have not experienced the economic benefits of higher education in America. In the Hispanic culture, family is often given the highest priority. Many parents are opposed to sending their children – especially girls – far from home, even for an education.

Although five El Paso students were accepted by MIT last year, only four enrolled at the school. Alicia Ayala went to the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) instead.

"She wanted to leave with her parents' blessing, but they wouldn't give it to her," says Enrique Arzaga, one of the MIT students from El Paso.

At the end of their senior year in high school, Mr. Arzaga helped MIT officials communicate with Ms. Ayala after her parents refused to let any correspondence from MIT get through to her.

"That's real common in central Mexico," Martinez says. "Parents won't usually let a girl go away to live somewhere else until she's married."

Back in El Paso, Ayala is majoring in metallurgy at UTEP. Sometimes she wonders what it would be like to be at MIT instead. "But I put it into the back of my head," she says. She's come to terms with the fact that her parents didn't want their 18-year-old daughter going out into the world so young.

"There's always graduate school down the road," Ayala says. She plans to apply to MIT and continue her metallurgy studies after graduating from UTEP.

EVEN without parental resistance, some Hispanic college students find it difficult to adjust to attending school far from home.

David Villarreal, another El Paso student at MIT, remembers having second thoughts about leaving Texas after he was accepted to the school last spring. He was offered a full scholarship at UTEP. "I started thinking about whether I wanted to go away from home," he says. "But my parents encouraged me to go. I think I might have regrets if I'd stayed in Texas for school."

Unlike his classmates, Mr. Villarreal chose not to come to MIT early for the eight-week Project Interphase, an orientation program for incoming minority students. "I wasn't ready to leave home yet," he says. "It was really hard for me at first."

But Martinez and the other El Paso students who came for Interphase say it was a helpful way to introduce themselves to the new environment. "We immersed ourselves gently," Martinez says. "That really helped."

Many of the Hispanic students at MIT stick together and have helped each other adjust to their new environment. A Mexican-American support group on campus has about 70 members. "They're my closest friends here," Villarreal says.

Like many Hispanic students who come from impoverished public schools, Villarreal felt unprepared initially for rigorous college academics. "I thought I was going to fail a couple of courses," he says. "But I didn't." MIT's Office of Minority Education offers tutoring for students, and he went there for help several times during the first semester.

The four El Paso students are beginning to realize that their decision to come to MIT will open doors to their future. They will spend the summer working at Texas Instruments in Dallas. "We've got guaranteed jobs for the summer," Villarreal says in amazement.

Arzaga and Martinez recently returned to Ysleta High School as recruiting representatives for MIT. They encouraged the students in their hometown high school to think about applying to MIT. "We try to tell them to weigh everything," Martinez says. "It's going to be hard – it's going to be cold. But all the hardships are worth it. I try to tell them not to let anything stand in their way."

New Man at an Old Mag

Editor Bill Emmott lets his actions speak at Britain's Economist

By Alexander MacLeod
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

LONDON

BILL EMMOTT, the new editor of The Economist, is unwilling to say much for public consumption at this stage. But what he is prepared to say reflects the exacting standards that have made the magazine a striking journalistic, financial, and global success.

"I will be keeping the [Economist] resolutely upmarket at a time when other publications are tending to move down-market," he said as he moved into the editorial chair at the Economist's high-tech London headquarters in downtown St. James's.

A colleague explained that Mr. Emmott, who was formerly business editor, preferred to remain publicly reticent and let "what he does with the [magazine] speak for itself."

But he forecast that the new man at the helm would "continue to modernize and foster high-grade political and economic debate on both sides of the Atlantic."

The Economist's mixture of editorial boldness, thoughtful discussion of issues, and technical innovation has generated a global readership and boosted weekly sales earlier this year to more than half a million, with half a dozen printing plants around the world. Its success is even more remarkable because the Economist's style of journalism is not everyone's cup of tea.

Outside the London offices, a waterfall 30 feet high will mark the 150th anniversary, in September, of the magazine's founding. The cascade sparked disagreement even before the water began to flow.

Angela Cromer, the sculptor, calls it "Undercurrents," and says it represents the forces of change that shape the news. But a former Economist journalist who left because he found it too "university common room" and "very stuffy" said a better name is "Babbling Brook" – to "reflect the style of the editorials."

Such waspishness has its American counterpart. James Fallows, Washington editor of the Atlantic Monthly, earlier this year assailed the Economist for its "Oxford Union argumentative style" that involved "a stance so cocksure of its rightness and superiority that it would be a shame to freight it with mere fact."

No matter how much controversy the Economist generates, however, it is undeniably successful. Emmott, who was appointed editor in April, has taken over a publication with an expanding readership (most of it outside Britain) and an enviable reputation as an opinion-former.

MEDIA

Marjorie Scardino, an American who in March became chief executive, says the Economist could carry no advertisements and still make money. In fact, it carries many ads, and currently is No. 5 in terms of magazine advertising pages in the US.

The paper also has a history of drawing its writers from top universities and launching senior editors into the stratosphere of politics, finance, and journalism. Emmott, who has a first-class degree from Oxford University, moved into the editor's office after Rupert Pennant-Rea left it to become deputy governor of the Bank of England.

Andrew Knight, Mr. Pennant-Rea's predecessor, is chairman of Rupert Murdoch's News International. Andrew Neil, editor of the London Sunday Times, and Jonathan Fenby, newly appointed editor of the Observer, both cut their journalistic teeth on the Economist. Sarah Hogg was its economics editor before Prime Minister John Major chose her to head his policy unit.

It is not surprising that, with talent of such high caliber at its disposal, the Economist has acquired a reputation for sticking its neck out.

Economist editorials, or "leaders," were campaigning for privatization years before Margaret Thatcher made it the centerpiece of her economic policies. Reaganomics was still high fashion in the US when the magazine began to inveigh against budget deficits.

Occasionally it gets things heroically wrong. Right up to Britain's departure from the European Community's Exchange Rate Mechanism last September, the Economist was singing the ERM's praises.

A staff member who has helped to write many editorials said, only half-jokingly: "The Economist writing formula is to simplify the problem and exaggerate the solution."

It certainly is not reticent. Under the headline "John Major's last year?" in its May 15 issue, for example, it warned the prime minister that unless he drastically improved his performance, "the knives will glint, understandably."

According to Melanie McDonagh, who worked at the Economist for a time as a journalistic trainee, keeping writers' names off articles is a mixed blessing. Journalists may be unhappy at not getting credit for their efforts, but it is possible for an authoritative editorial to be written by "a 25-year-old who is still wet behind the ears."

Chances are it will also be heavily rewritten. Knight says that before he moved to News International he was the highest-paid sub-editor in British journalism. A staff writer described the rewrite process: "You have to get used to having your material massaged and worked over," especially at first. "After a while you adapt, but you can still get a shock when you see what is published."

At 225,000, the Economist's North American circulation is more than twice that of Britain's. Michael Leapman, a British media analyst, thinks the great popularity of the Economist in the US is "rather odd" but knows of no plan to alter the magazine's publishing base.

STAFF

150 YEARS OLD: *The magazine is so successful – especially abroad – that it could survive without running any ads.*

Grand Slams Beckon in June

SPORTS NOTEBOOK

JUNE always begins with hopes of Grand Slams still alive in a variety of sports, only to end with few (if any) remaining. And so it promises to be in 1993.

Women's tennis has already lost its chance with the stabbing injury that forced Monica Seles to the sidelines. Seles, who has dominated women's tennis in the last couple of years as few athletes have in any sport, came within one victory of a slam in both 1991 and '92. She clearly began this year as the player most likely to achieve one, and had launched her new bid successfully by winning the Australian Open.

Australian men's champion Jim Courier has advanced to the quarterfinals of the French Open, which continues through next weekend. Courier won both the French and the Australian a year ago, though, before faltering at Wimbledon and the US Open. In any case, it is always a long shot that one player will sweep all four tournaments.

Indeed, in the nearly 70 years the feat has been recorded, one can still count all male and female grand slammers on the fingers of one hand: Don Budge, 1938; Maureen Connolly, 1953; Rod Laver, 1962 and 1969; Margaret Smith Court, 1970; and Steffi Graf, 1988.

Golf's Grand Slam is even rarer. In fact, when Masters champion Bernhard Langer tees it up in the US Open at the historic Baltusrol course in Springfield, N.J., on June 17, he'll be seeking the second leg of a sweep no one has accomplished.

It's true that in 1930 Bobby Jones created the term by winning the US and British Opens plus the US and British Amateurs. But the closest anyone has come to the currently recognized slam – Masters, US Open, British Open, and PGA – was in 1953 when Ben Hogan won all but the PGA. No one else has ever won more than two in a single year.

Women's golf also recognizes a Grand Slam, consisting presently of the US Open, LPGA, du Maurier Classic, and Nabisco Dinah Shore, but no one has ever won it, either.

Horse racing also offers a "slam" with its Triple Crown – a feat that has also become very rare – last occurring in the '70s with Secretariat in 1973 and Affirmed in 1978. This year's classics conclude with the Belmont Stakes in New York on Saturday, but already a sweep has been missed because of Sea Hero's victory in the Kentucky Derby followed by Prairie Bayou's triumph in the Preakness.

Three-time winners also rare

Another rare feat is for a team to "threepeat" – a relatively recent term coined for winning three consecutive championships. Lately, an extraordinarily high number of teams have had a shot, but so far they've all learned what most of their predecessors also found out: that third title is the most elusive of all.

Duke failed to become the first three-time NCAA basketball champion since UCLA in the 1970s; then the heavily favored Pittsburgh Penguins were upset by the New York Islanders to end their dream of three straight Stanley Cups.

A fascinating situation has been playing out for a half dozen years in pro basketball, where no team has won three National Basketball Association championships in a row since the Boston Celtics in their glory years of the 1960s. Los Angeles had a chance after winning in 1987 and '88 but was thwarted by Detroit. The Pistons then made a bid with victories in 1989 and '90, but also failed to threepeat. Now it's Chicago's turn, after winning in '91 and '92. The Bulls, too, have found the going tough – losing the first two games of their best-of-seven Eastern final against the New York Knicks before rebounding with a big win in Chicago Saturday.

Baseball also has a potential "threepeater" in the Atlanta Braves, who have won two straight National League pennants. The Braves have a good chance for another division title and a shot at a threepeat, but there's a lot of history stacked against them: The last NL team to do it was the wartime St. Louis Cardinals in 1942-44 – and that was before the playoff system made it theoretically even more difficult. Oddly, the American League has seen it happen several times since then – by the New York Yankee powerhouses of the 1950s and '60s, and by the Oakland A's in the '70s and again a few years ago (1988-90).

– Larry Eldridge

MUSIC

Cleveland's Legendary Orchestra Turns 75

By Thor Eckert Jr.
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

NEW YORK

RICK SHERLOCK

CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA: *Under the baton of its current music director, Christoph von Dohnányi, the group performs 'Die Walküre, one of four operas in Wagner's epic 'Ring' cycle.*

THE Cleveland Orchestra has never been the showiest of American ensembles. Even under the direction of the legendary George Szell, it never had the robust cachet of the Chicago Symphony under Fritz Reiner or the New York Philharmonic led by Leonard Bernstein.

What set the Cleveland Orchestra apart, beginning with the Szell years, was its ability to perform as a huge chamber-music ensemble, with the sense that every player was listening to, and reacting to, every other player in the group. For that reason, the Cleveland was always the preferred orchestra in the United States among musicians.

Also, it has always had a deep-rooted caring for excellence and a firm belief that by serving its community first and foremost, it would be fulfilling its function in the highest possible manner.

And as the institution celebrates its 75th season (the final concert is on June 5), it has been business as usual, without particular fanfare, without a string of special added commissions and high-profile tours.

In fact, the only event that could be construed as unique was the inauguration of a four-year presentation of Wagner's epic four-opera "Ring" cycle in concert performances in the orchestra's own Severance Hall, and for recording by London Records, all under the baton of its music director, Christoph von Dohnányi.

The Cleveland Orchestra is unique in my experience, both as an ensemble and as an institution that serves its community and is supported, even adored, by that community. Not unexpectedly, the question always asked is, "Why Cleveland?"

The orchestra's executive director, Thomas W. Morris, has even asked it himself. "I have struggled to understand the situation here. Why is it that a city of this size, and of this location, has an orchestra and an art museum like this, for starters? The odd thing is that for all the reasons that that shouldn't be possible – the size of the city, the look of the city, all those things – those are all precisely the reasons that it *is* possible, because there is a community desire and *need* to have great institutions here. The orchestra is clearly at the center of the community psyche. It needs it. And it also pays for it, it demands excellence of it...."

MR. MORRIS is also quick to point out that the orchestra had an important history before the redoubtable George Szell brought the ensemble into international renown.

"I don't think it's totally correct to say that this is simply the orchestra that Szell built," Mr. Morris says. "It's basically, again, the community and the board that decided at some point it wanted a world-class international orchestra, and ... it hired the people to do it and held them accountable, and supported them, wooed them, and financed them. And of course the one that is clearly the embodiment of that major thrust forward was Szell. What people tend to forget is that Szell was here 25 years, and it really wasn't until the last five years of that tenure that it all really emerged. It took a long time building, nurturing, training."

It's vital to make this distinction, Morris says, because, "It goes to that point that the community has to want it, and if the community doesn't want it, George Szell or Christoph von Dohnányi can't demand it."

Mr. Dohnányi succeeded Lorin Maazel, who had been given the title of music director in the interim years following Szell's death, during which the orchestra was led by musical adviser Pierre Boulez. Mr. Maazel kept the spirit of Szell's unusually flexible orchestra alive during his decade at the helm, and Dohnányi manifestly understands that this sense of a huge chamber ensemble with each player listening to everybody else, is what makes the Cleveland unique. This can be heard in the recordings **[see accompanying story, below]** but is most obvious in concert.

I FINALLY had a chance to hear the Cleveland Orchestra in its home hall this season, and the impact was unexpectedly brilliant for one used to concerts in New York's Carnegie and Avery Fisher Halls.

The work was the last of two performances of Wagner's "Die Walküre" prior to a week of recording sessions for London Records. The added dimension of the players listening to the singers as well as themselves, all under the guidance of a conductor with a refreshingly direct, propulsive, viscerally dramatic, yet touchingly tender view of the score, made for some of the most invigorating Wagner I have heard in years. And with the haunting and vocally sumptuous Sieglinde of Alessandra Marc, the fiery Fricka of Anja Silja, and the unflaggingly firm Wotan of Robert Hale (all three will be on the recording), this "Walküre" promises to give all current recordings a serious challenge.

Recordings have featured prominently in the orchestra's plans since the Szell days. Right now, Morris notes, there are some 20 records "in the can" waiting to be released, including recordings of Mozart, Bruckner, Mahler, Ives, Varèse, Messiaen, and Rachmaninoff, many of which have unusual fillers.

The orchestra records with Dohnányi and principal guest conductor Vladimir Ashkenazy for London, Pierre Boulez for Deutsche Grammophon, and a few special projects like Kurt Sanderling's recording for Erato of Shostakovich's Fifteenth.

"We're trying to build a repertoire. And basically our plan has been, as a very European classical orchestra, to cover the center of the repertoire, in addition to doing a lot of 20th-century things and some showpiece works, and opera," says Morris.

The Cleveland tours the US regularly (this year, all in the Eastern US) and now has a summer residency at the Salzburg Festival (though it will skip this summer and return there in 1994). And it has its annual summer season at the Blossom Festival, now under the direction of Leonard Slatkin.

Dohnányi is known to be a good friend of 20th-century music, and there was some concern as to how the Cleveland public would take to his sometimes astringent tastes. As Morris notes, "Dohnányi is the most fascinating programmer I've ever worked with, because he's as interested in the first piece on the program as he is with the one at the end."

He cites a program of Webern, Mozart, and Bartók, for which the entire audience stayed and cheered. "It just reminded me again that commanding the attention of an audience has nothing whatsoever to do really with the difficulty of the music, it's how you present it.... You don't have to surround things with 'Bolero'!"

Recordings Flaunt Cleveland Conductor's Virtuosity

NEW YORK

FOR a taste of the Cleveland Symphony's style, several fine examples of their work exist on compact disc.

In Christoph von Dohnányi's brisk style of conducting is a great deal of subtle balancing and nuance, and in such a complex and overwhelming score as the **Mahler Sixth Symphony** (A minor, "Tragic"), the conductor helps sort out what tends to pass by densely rather than musically.

The first three movements of this performance are as good as any on CD; the lengthy last movement, with its huge hammer blows of fate, lacks the sort of heart-stopping terror that would make this reading indispensable. Nevertheless, it shows off the orchestra and conductor to finest effect. And by including Arnold Schoenberg's lesser-performed "Five Orchestral Pieces, (Op. 16)" and Webern's early, rather romantic "In Sommerwind," Dohnányi creates an effective two-hour program for the home listener on the London label.

Shostakovich's Tenth (E minor, Op. 93) is, compared with the Mahler, a terse and lean but no less harrowing work. It includes the composer's brutal post-mortem portrait of Stalin in the second movement Allegro. Throughout, Dohnányi is a consummate master, and the Cleveland's virtuosity seems almost miraculous. Here, the added piece is Lutoslawski's "Musique Funèbre," a powerful work in a powerful performance, also recorded on the London label.

Shostakovich's Fifteenth (A major, Op. 141) is an apparently puzzling work that hides its secrets behind quotes from Wagner, Rossini, and others. No one has come up with a fully viable explanation of the work, but in this performance under Kurt Sanderling's masterly direction, one worries not so much about "meaning" as about mood and passion. It is the composer's bleakest symphonic work. The orchestra is superbly captured on this Erato disc.

– T. E. Jr.

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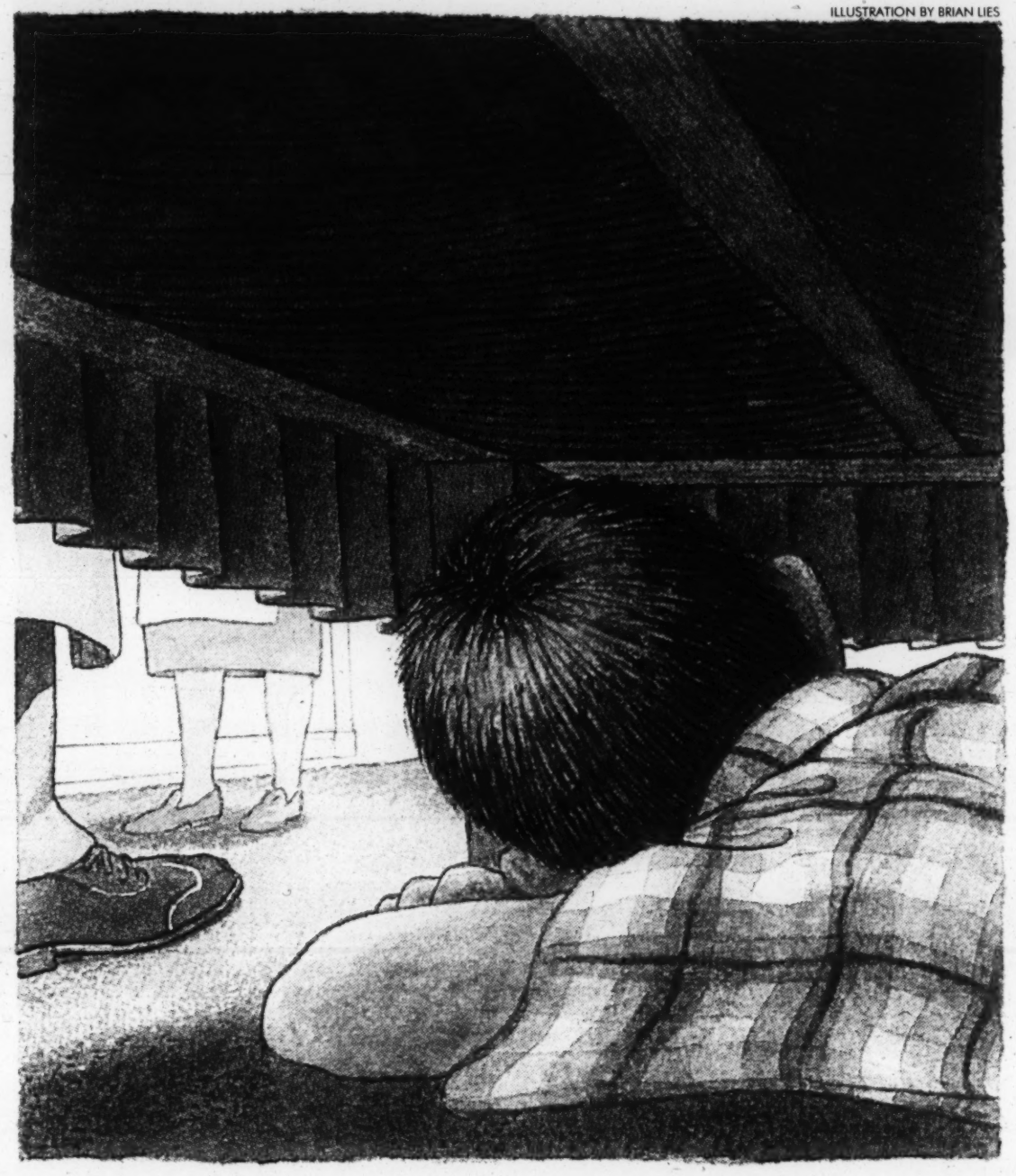
The Home Forum.

A New Kid Named Elmer

ILLUSTRATION BY BRIAN LIES



IT WAS the second week of third grade, and this kid transferred into our class: Elmer.

"He looks like an Elmer," David Corey said out loud, and some of us started laughing. I noticed Elmer's face turned bright red as he shuffled to the empty desk behind me. He was a chubby sort of kid, with very short hair, which made his face look even pudgier. He usually wore a white shirt buttoned tight around his throat, and a pair of gray plaid high-water pants that kids would joke about: "Yo, Elmer, is there a flood in your neighborhood?" "Hey, Elmer, I like those plaid bermudas!"

But mostly kids didn't talk much to Elmer. They didn't even like to sit near him.

For one thing, Elmer smelled kind of funny. I know that sounds mean, but it was true. It was like no one ever made him take a bath, or at least not very often.

Elmer wasn't what you'd call an athletic sort of kid. In fact, he was pretty clumsy. Out on the playground, when we chose sides for baseball, Elmer was usually about the last person picked.

Because he sat near me, I guess maybe I noticed him a little more than the other kids did. Sometimes he'd tap me on the shoulder and ask for help with a math problem, even though there wasn't a single person in that whole third-grade class who had more trouble with math than I did.

Once on the playground that year, David Corey got mad at Elmer and started calling him some pretty nasty names. He told everyone that Elmer had already been in the third grade last year, but that he was so stupid he had to repeat it. "Elmer couldn't count the candles on his own birthday cake," David Corey said.

"That's not true," I said, "he was in second grade last year, like all of us."

Elmer and David Corey both looked at me sort of surprised.

I didn't really know why I had bothered to say anything. Maybe David Corey was right about Elmer repeating third grade.

After school that day, Elmer caught up with me outside.

"You walking home on the path?" he asked.

I usually did walk home on the path, but I didn't want to walk with Elmer, and I didn't want him to think we were suddenly best friends or anything.

"No," I said, "I'm going the other way. I'm going to a friend's house." It was a lie, and I walked an extra three blocks home just to avoid being with him. By the time I got home that day, I felt like someone I didn't want to know.

THAT same week my mother reminded me that my birthday was coming up, and asked me if I'd like to have a party. We sat down after dinner one night and made a list of about 10 friends I wanted to invite.

When we finished, my mother looked the list over and surprised me by asking, "What about Elmer?" She'd heard me talk about him sometimes, I guess mainly about how I wished he'd take a bath.

"What do you mean?" I said.

"Wouldn't you like to invite Elmer?" my mother asked.

"Mom," I said, "Elmer's not really one of my friends."

"I know," she said, "but I bet he'd like it if you invited him. He probably doesn't go to many birthday parties."

I wasn't wild about the idea, but my mom kept saying it would be a nice thing to do.

A few days later, after the invitations went out, I mentioned to Chris, my best friend, that Elmer would be at the party. We were out on the playground, hanging from the horizontal bars, and Chris looked at me like I'd said something in a foreign language.

"*Elmer*?" he said. And then, guessing that I was joking, he said, "Yeah, right."

He started laughing so hard he had to let go of the bars and dropped to the sand below.

I SUPPOSE I was hoping Elmer wouldn't come to the party, but of course he did. He was there in his tight white shirt and his funny, too-short pants, and I'd never seen him look so happy.

My father had made a piñata filled with candy that was dangling from the ceiling, and my mother controlled its movements with a long string. We all took turns wearing a blindfold and trying to smash it open with a baseball bat.

Elmer, who was always so clumsy on the baseball field, amazed us all by being the one who finally broke it open. Everybody cheered as they scrambled to pick up loose candy, and my mother gave Elmer a special prize – a balsa-wood airplane that we all looked at enviously.

Later we ate cake and ice cream, and afterwards my father turned the lights out and told some scary stories. I noticed that Elmer couldn't stop smiling, even when the stories got really creepy.

That afternoon, because it was raining, we played an indoor game of hide and seek.

I went to my favorite hiding place beneath the sofa near the front door. I'd just crawled under when the doorbell rang.

My mother answered the door, and I peeked out with one eye. Standing there in a battered gray raincoat was an older man I didn't recognize – a man much older than my own father.

"Hello," he said to my mother, "I'm Elmer's father."

My mother invited him in and called my name out several times so that I'd tell Elmer his father had arrived. I didn't want to give up my hiding place, so I stayed where I was without saying anything.

"It was so nice of your son to invite Elmer to this party," Elmer's father said. "Elmer's never been to a birthday party before. He was looking forward to this all week. In fact, I've never seen Elmer quite so excited about anything."

"Well, we certainly enjoyed having him here," my mother said. "Elmer's a very nice boy."

"Yes," Elmer's father said sadly. "Elmer's a nice boy." And then, speaking more quietly, he said, "You know, I'm actually Elmer's foster father. His real parents, well, they didn't take very good care of him." Whispering, he said, "Very bad situation. He's been shuffled around from one foster home to the next since he was about 4."

"Oh," my mother said in her worried voice, "I didn't know."

"My wife and I are the third family he's lived with this year," the man said. "We're kind of old to be starting over with a 9-year-old, but Elmer's a good boy, and I hate to think of him living with people who don't care about him."

"I'm sure Elmer's very lucky to be with you," my mother said.

Lying there under the sofa, my cheek began burning from where it rested on the carpet. I wished now that it had been my own idea to invite Elmer. Still, at least my mother had thought of it.

I CAN'T honestly say that Elmer and I ever became close friends or anything, but I started making a point of being nicer to him after that. Sometimes it was just little things, like choosing him to be on my baseball team when there were still plenty of good players left to be picked. Or walking home with him on the path.

About a year later he moved away – maybe to live with another family, I don't know. Now and then I see some kid with funny-looking clothes or a goofy expression, and I remember Elmer. And it helps to remind me. I remember then that a lot of people – even people who seem pretty normal and happy – may have lives that are kind of sad, and that the smallest, easiest things you can do sometimes help to make their lives a little bit better.

Dean Albarelli

KIDSPACE

'Kidspace' is a place on The Home Forum pages where kids can find stories that will spark imaginations, entertain with a tall tale, explain how things work, or describe a real-life event. These articles appear twice a month, usually on Tuesdays.

Say, Have You Got a Riddle?

FOR centuries, riddles were serious business. Oedipus of Greek mythology guessed the riddle of the Sphinx, a monster terrorizing the people of Thebes, and saved himself and the city. Samson of the Bible's Old Testament bet 30 outfits of clothes that the Philistines couldn't guess his riddle. He was right. But they cheated, threatening Samson's bride-to-be with death unless she got the answer for them. (You can find the story in the book of Judges, Chapter 14.)

In Old England, the Anglo-Saxons and their descendants made up riddles to tease and test each other. Ninety-five Anglo-Saxon riddles have survived in a volume called the "Exeter Book."

If you've read "The Hobbit," by J. R. R. Tolkien, you'll remember that Bilbo Baggins gets into a duel of riddles inside a mountain cave with the slimy creature, Gollum.

Although riddles are often tricky, they're usually about simple things. When we guess a riddle, we start to look at life differently. Sometimes we see the world around us in a whole new light.

See if you can guess the answers to a few riddles. Then you might want to write one yourself.

Since I mentioned the riddle of the Sphinx, let's start with that one. Before you begin, however, let me tell you that kids are usually good at riddles, often better than adults. Here it is:

What walks on four legs in the morning,
two legs in the middle of the day,
and three legs in the evening?

Have you guessed it? The answer is us. We crawl when we're babies, walk upright in the middle of our life, then sometimes use a cane when we get older. In this riddle, one day stands for a lifetime.

I must confess, I was never very good at guessing riddles. That's why I started making them up.

Riddles have their own mystery and logic, and you can't really say how to solve them. You just guess whatever comes into your head. Let's look at another riddle, this one from "The Hobbit:"

What has roots as nobody sees,
is taller than trees,
up up it goes,
and yet never grows?

Trapped in a mountain, Bilbo Baggins quickly guessed a mountain. He was right.

Here's a riddle my daughter, Wendy, helped me write. See if you know the answer.

Curved like a snake
I go where I wish,
Sometimes fast, sometimes slow,
Belly full of fish.

If you guessed a river, you're right!

I have to confess, I was never very good at guessing riddles myself. That's why I started making them up. At least I would know the answer. To make a riddle, I choose something I find interesting, or anything that catches my eye. As I work on the riddle, I try to both hint at the answer and hide it.

Sometimes I make riddles that give themselves away if you know the original meaning of the word, like this one:

The night has a thousand eyes,
But we are the eyes of day.
Children pluck away our lashes
To know love's fickle way.

The original meaning of "daisy" is day's-eye, which is, of course, the answer.

Or sometimes I'm outside, say, at the beach. I'm sitting on rocks covered with barnacles and mussels. Mussels are those small, dark, clam-like shellfish that cling to the rocks. Thinking of them, I wrote this riddle:

Where three worlds meet
I plant my feet.
I am black, brown, or blue.
I am strong, I hold on.

A riddle can be long or short. Here is a one-line riddle I wrote about a bird. See if you can guess which kind.

Flames flicker when I fly.

You'll know the answer if you've ever seen a red-winged blackbird fly.

Occasionally, my students write riddles. Here's one by Louise:

My colors are many,
My purposes are few.
You can knot me, tie me, twist me too.
I weave through holes, up, in, and through.
Once I'm on, you should know what to do.

If you haven't already guessed, her riddle is about a necktie. Riddles can be about anything. Can you guess this one:

Some smooth, some rough,
Some soft, some tough,
Tools without hammer,
Polished for glamour.

Is this one a bit harder? The answer is fingernails.

People in other countries like riddles, too. Many years ago I heard this riddle in German, which I translated:

Deep in forest stands
A man of tiny height.
Although no king, he wears
A coat of purple bright.
Who is this one, I beg?
He stands on just one leg.

Most Germans who hear this riddle guess it right away. It's a toadstool. The tiny purple variety may be more common in Europe.

Are you ready now to make up your own riddle? Remember, there are no rules. You can use rhyme, half-rhyme, or no rhyme.

And if your riddle is too hard, or too easy, you can change it a bit. Be sure to write your riddle down. Then you can try it out on a friend, parent, or teacher.

Take a good look at the world around you. Somewhere a riddle is hiding.

Ben Jacques

My Best Friend

(Written especially for young people)

IT'S nice to have a best friend. Your best friend shares happy times with you and makes you feel better when you're sad. Wouldn't it be great if this friend were always with you? I learned that the love I felt when I was with my friends is *always* with me because God is the source of all real love. God *is* Love, and I found that I could always count on Love. I started thinking of God as my best friend.

This is how it happened: I was just beginning high school, and I was miserable. It was tough to make friends. Not only was I a little shy, but in my previous school I had been picked on by other kids, and I was afraid that would happen again. Joining activities didn't help. I felt as if I didn't belong, and that I would always be on the outside.

Christian Science Sunday School is where I learned that God is Love. I was also learning that you can solve problems through prayer and through what you learn about God in the Bible and in *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy, who discovered Christian Science. I wanted to put into practice what I was learning about God to heal this situation.

The Christian Science Monitor's Religious Article

I realized that because God is Love, He is always loving and loves everyone—including me! God doesn't just love the cheerleaders or the football players or the "in crowd." He didn't make some children outgoing and likable, and others dull and unattractive. Our real identity is God's spiritual likeness. Mrs. Eddy points out in *Science and Health*, "The Scriptures inform us that man is made in the image and likeness of God." God gives every one of his children grace, intelligence, happiness, and talent. What He makes is beautiful, good, joyous, loved.

Christ Jesus taught that everyone is worthy of God's love. He didn't just hang around with the "popular guys" or the rich and powerful, but he went to those who most needed to know they were God's perfect children—the sick, the poor, and those considered sinners. Matthew's Gospel tells us that when the disciples asked him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" he presented a small child—someone who was not exactly on the top-ten list of important people in his society! Jesus pointed out that we need to follow this child's example by being more humble. He taught that this would actually give us a better life.

Everything I was learning about God and His spiritual idea, man, helped me to see myself more spiritually. As God's spiritual reflection, I am already confident, happy, valuable, complete. No matter what activity I'm involved in, I can express the qualities God gives me, such as creativity, beauty, and strength. I saw that I didn't have to look to others to measure how good I am. I'm good right now, because that's how God made me! But my prayers couldn't stop there. I had to see others in this way, too. It wouldn't be right for me to see *myself* as a wonderful idea of God, and *others* as simply popular or unpopular.

I don't remember exactly when things changed, but I found myself feeling happier and more confident. I stopped being afraid that people were going to pick on me and look at me as an outcast. I found myself being more outgoing toward others and making many new friends. And one teacher remarked what a nice smile I had!

I guess you could say that God is everyone's best friend. There are no cliques or outcasts at all in His kingdom, but we are all included and cherished, like one big family.

This article originally appeared in the August 31, 1992, issue of the Christian Science Sentinel.

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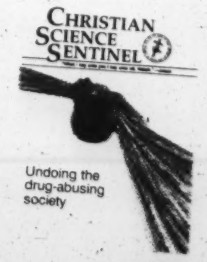


"First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

Unity and Leadership

THE falling away of the chief contention of our times – between the communist and democratic systems, wherein China lags – has not brought us the peace-of-mind dividend we might have expected. A lot of contention is left over: Bosnian ethnic strife, US-Japan trade, oil prices, global agriculture policy, Washington economic legislation.

How can the citizen contribute to unity when the human race seems so inclined to withhold support?

This newspaper's values require us to state that the address to any dispute begins, for us, with an examination of what is going on in our own thinking. Our approach is to consider first whether any obtuseness, hardness of heart, or self-will is keeping us from seeing our perceived adversary's worth and needs.

EDITORIAL

The economic weather is driven by forces bigger than those Clinton's cloud-seeding proposals would affect. But he and Congress must meet each other halfway.

We try to use the knowledge that our emotional reactions give us. The emotional intensities aroused by disputes frustrate solutions; but they also can guide us to self-examination and, by reversal, to unity. Intensities: Think of the abortion controversy in Europe and America. Or the asylum issue in Germany, where that country's attempt to cancel its historical transgressions by opening its doors to refugees has soured economically and socially. Or the Balkan hostilities.

Time is an unsettling factor. Cities are living through another phase of cultural change. Boston, for example, is no longer the city of Brahmins and Irish: 40 percent of the the city's population is black, Hispanic, or Asian. Much community tension derives from a lag in perceiving how things are: Continually surprised by change, we are less secure in our judgment and lash out at newcomers, or at those who cling to their privileges.

Now the policy part:

President Clinton is having a hard time getting much respect in Congress for his budget, energy tax, health care, and other initiatives. He has just appointed a new spokesman, David Gergen, to help get across his message. The American political system, however, was not designed to make it easy for the chief executive to govern. The Madisonian view prevailed: Because each region or interest group could be counted on to pursue its interests, a system of checks and balances was best suited to keeping the nation energetic while stopping any one unit from stealing the show.

Frankly, the economic weather is driven by forces bigger than those that would be affected by the president's economic cloud-seeding proposals. Recession in Europe and elsewhere is making it difficult for the US recovery to find any legs. A worldwide revolution in work methods is eliminating both blue-collar and white-collar jobs. Expansion of the older section of the population is driving up health-care costs. Mr. Clinton took a risk in promising so much change. He said he could create jobs while drastically cutting the deficit, defying the economic link between the two.

Despite this pragmatic reading of Clinton's dilemma, we urge Congress to meet the president halfway.

With the appointment of Gergen, an experienced White House communicator for several Republican presidents, Clinton has signaled at least a willingness to employ a bipartisan sensibility for a fresh start. He should be given the stimulus measures he wants, especially those of social benefit (jobs for youths).

And Clinton should meet Congress halfway. The president may try to go to the country to sell his proposals over his fellow politicians' heads. But he hasn't the energy, an experienced-enough staff, or a sufficiently developed sense of direction to try to power his way to victory. His Democratic majorities are deceiving: Other loyalties, as on energy issues, cross party lines in moderate linkages; conservative coalitions still exist on social issues.

While Clinton has been stumbling across the Washington terrain, events abroad – most urgently the strife in Bosnia and Croatia – are exposing the need to develop working coalitions among the world's governments.

A leader creates unity through vision, not salesmanship or will. Clinton should keep it simple. He should concentrate on three issues: his budget approach, in which he would make major concessions to achieve a first-step deficit-reduction goal; health-care reform, to begin containing costs and extending service; and a crash foreign-policy education course for himself and the nation.

Unity requires that colleagues act collegially, the media do not buzz around like gnats, and the people not frustrate leaders with orneriness.

The world steadily moves toward unity, economically and politically. And individual rights gain currency.

In recent national elections, citizens showed they want better *performance* from leaders. They withheld support from officeholders. Now, however, all must help to make our governments and institutions work.

ELIZABETH ROCK

Reform US Waste Site Selection

By Barry G. Rabe

NO society spends as much money, generates as much political anguish, or accomplishes less in implementing its hazardous waste policies than does the United States. The recent Environmental Protection Agency decision to place a moratorium on new incinerators and review the role of incineration in hazardous waste disposal is a reasonable step. But it should be expanded.

Most of the present regulations were established in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This allowed us to close hundreds of abusive facilities – but that is all. We now must focus not just on incineration, but on hazardous waste policy as a whole. For example:

■ Change the siting procedure. States currently take what is called the Ed McMahon approach. Like the Publisher's Clearinghouse representative who shows up on a doorstep to announce a family has won millions, siting officials make their decisions in secret and then announce to some lucky community that it gets to "host" a disposal facility.

Canadian provinces, notably Alberta and Manitoba, have shown that siting can be part of a larger process of examining hazardous waste options. In both provinces, contentious, top-down siting approaches were abandoned in the 1980s. Instead, provincial officials conducted hundreds of public hearings, making clear that siting would only be considered among volunteer communities. Many volunteers came forth, and central disposal facilities were approved with broad support. Moreover, siting was treated as part of a multifaceted approach to waste policy – not a harsh take-it-or-leave-it approach.

■ Make waste reduction a priority. Some states, such as Minnesota and North Carolina, have devised creative ways to encourage industries to scrutinize their manufacturing practices and decrease waste. In many instances, inexpensive measures can lead to considerable reductions in waste volumes.

"Right-to-know" mandates have forced industry to reveal the types and volumes of wastes they release each year. This has embarrassed many and encouraged them finally to look carefully at internal practices. In many cases, this leads to greater production efficiency and less pollution.

■ Trash Superfund. Intended as a temporary, five-year measure to clean abandoned dumps, Superfund instead consumed billions of dollars with little result.

Fortunately, thoughtful reform proposals are in circulation. The most promising emphasize simple, feasible cleanups. These would employ a public-works funding mechanism – replacing the litigative search-and-destroy method that drains scarce resources and leaves most sites untouched.

■ Take equity seriously. Equitable distribution is sometimes viewed negatively because it implies interference with national markets. Some federal judges dislike it because of potential conflict with the commerce clause of the Constitution. But hazardous waste is not a welcome commodity. Instead, it raises questions, including the question of equity in social acceptance of burdens related to disposal.

Existing policy is largely neutral on the issue of interstate equity. At present, some states, like Massachusetts, New Jersey, and North Carolina, are only too happy to dodge the larger questions of siting, sending much of their waste to other states or nations. "Waste magnets" such as Alabama, Ohio, and South Carolina are increasingly resentful of solving other states' problems. Equity is further complicated by growing evidence that proximity to disposal facilities is borne disproportionately by poor, predominantly minority, groups. A new waste policy must devise more equity.

To incinerate or not is an important question, and it must be addressed both by agency action and in the next round of legislation. But the nation should take advantage of the incineration moratorium to reflect on the larger question of disposing hazardous wastes.

■ *Barry G. Rabe is a professor of health politics at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He is writing a book on waste-facility siting in Canada and the US.*

OPINION/ESSAYS

Quotes and Ethics

By Daniel Schorr

ONE of the first things I learned in my journalism course more than a half century ago was the sanctity of the quotation mark. You could say bad things about a person, but could not make a person appear to be saying bad things about himself or herself by putting the words between quotes.

That was before television, which has its own rules. In docudramas and reality-based shows, people are made to say, through the actors portraying them, things they may never have said. Even in news programs, deft editing can make a person speak sound bites out of context.

Now television's urge to fictionalize has invaded magazines. In San Francisco, a court is weighing whether a New Yorker writer, Janet Malcolm, libeled a former psychoanalyst, Jeffrey Masson, by using quote unquote to put words in his mouth unflattering to himself.

She had taped many hours of interviews with him, but nowhere did Mr. Masson call himself "an intellectual gigolo" and "the greatest analyst who ever lived." Nor did he say he planned to use the house of Anna Freud, daughter of the founder of psychoanalysis, for "sex, women, fun." The magazine's lawyer wanted to delete sex and women but was overridden by Ms. Malcolm's editor, who is her husband.

She portrayed Masson as a boastful, manipulative jerk. Maybe he is, but that does not confer the right to have him appear to say so within quotation marks.

A journalist can hardly discuss an issue of journalistic ethics without some bias, and let me admit mine. I have had reservations about Malcolm ever since she wrote, "Every journalist who is not too stupid or too full of himself to notice what is going on knows that what he does is morally indefensible." She was writing about writer Joe McGinniss and how he got Jeffrey MacDonald, the doctor convicted of murdering his wife and two daughters, to confide in him for the book "Fatal Vision." Malcolm talked about the journalist as a kind of "confidence man," preying on the people he deals with.

She does not say whether that is how she dealt with Masson, but, according to his testimony, she did tell him, "Jeff, you'll love the piece." Well, he didn't. And his libel suit has been up to the Supreme Court and back, for trial, to the Federal Court in San Francisco.

I cannot understand Malcolm's position. She testifies that what she was trying to do was "render a readable quotation" from "sloppy, redundant, repetitious speech." Masson, she said, "tended to speak in a rather chaotic, contradictory way." But, if so, how better to reveal his personality than by transcribing a few paragraphs of his chaotic speech? And how deceptive, then, to have him speaking in pithy characterizations of himself.

The court will have to decide the novel legal issue of whether misquotations can be libelous and damaging. Some older members of the journalistic community are ready to render their non-legal judgment. A quote is a quote and an invented quote is a disgrace. It was Janet Malcolm who wrote, "The idea of a reporter inventing rather than reporting speech is a repugnant, even a sinister one." She wrote that about Mr. McGinniss, not about herself.

■ *Daniel Schorr is senior news analyst for National Public Radio.*

A Gift From a Justice to the People

By Kenneth R. Walker

THE late United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall spent his career in battle against closed minds and hard hearts of American political life. Justice Marshall was an epic warrior – in for the long haul – after adversaries had celebrated victories in individual battles.

Today he is enmeshed in a historic donnybrook over access to his personal papers for more than 3,000 cases he heard while on the Supreme Court.

In keeping with what appears to have been the justice's wishes, the Library of Congress has released the papers that provide rare insight into the court's workings and its current and past personalities. Marshall's family and many associates complain that the justice never intended those papers, complete with personal notes among the justices, be released so soon after his death last January.

"He planned to burn his papers," many of them say. "He was going to destroy them all." And they are right, as far as they go. The justice had made that determination after returning a $250,000 advance he sorely needed to publish his memoirs. Incredibly, the New York publishers told him they were uninterested in a book that did not reveal the secrets of the court's inner sanctum. This, he refused to do. That the life story of Thurgood Marshall without the court papers was not worth the advance speaks volumes about the mindset of book publishers when it comes to African-Americans.

Months later, Marshall signed the agreement with the library that upon his death, "the collection shall be available to the public at the discretion of the library." This was vintage Marshall. Faced with a publisher's unseemly demand, the justice was not a burner of history. He made history, and he almost certainly wanted to leave a record of his court years intact and available for scholarly research.

In his last years Marshall grew increasingly worried about the right-wing direction of the court. And instead of joining, or even writing, majority opinions affirming human and civil rights, the justice found himself at the end writing thundering dissents to what he saw as a degradation of American liberty.

So worried was the justice over this trend, that he reminded associates during President Reagan's second term: "I have an appointment for life, and I plan to serve out my term." As his health failed, Marshall changed his mind about that; just as, it seems, he changed his mind about burning his papers. Marshall's last gift to the democracy he did so much to nurture may turn out to be his greatest. By rending the veil on the extreme, antiquated secrecy in The Temple, Marshall has reaffirmed the sovereignty of the people in our republic.

With his retirement and replacement by Clarence Thomas, the justice's ideological enemies figured that they had won. Once more, however, they are reminded that Thurgood Marshall is not finished with them yet.

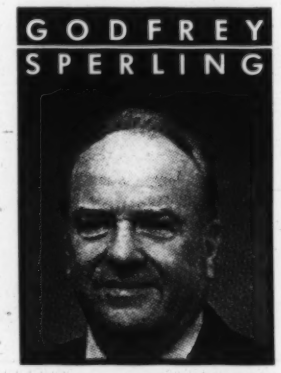
■ *Kenneth R. Walker, a Washington writer, is a member of the board of the Thurgood Marshall Memorial Scholarship Fund.*

Remembering RFK, 25 Years Later

WARREN ROGERS'S eyewitness account of Robert Kennedy's assassination is poignantly handled in his new book, "When I think of Bobby: A Personal Memoir of the Kennedy Years." It brings back RFK's last campaign – which I covered 25 years ago. There are so many memories: the first stop in the South, the challenges that lay before Bobby Kennedy in Indiana, Oregon, and California.

How will history remember this Kennedy? We in the press often talked as if there were two Robert Kennedys – the "good Bobby" and the "bad Bobby." The latter could on occasion be tough, nasty, and even ruthless. The "good Bobby" has been written about by Nicholas Lemann of Atlantic Monthly, in a recent Washington Post:

"The tragedy of his death and the nobility of his concerns, in combination, carry an unmistakable connotation of martyrdom; the assassination begins to seem not accidental but almost inevitable, a kind of punishment for being too good for the world. Kennedy's concern with ghetto poverty, so absent from national politics recently, comes across as having sprung from a moral purity that most politicians lack."



That's too glowing for me. I watched closely Bobby's deportment as he banged heads while badgering Democratic political leaders into backing his brother in 1960. He was – and remained – a politician of the hard-nosed school. He must have learned most of this from his father who made it abundantly clear to his sons that at times they had to figuratively use their fists to get ahead in this world.

But, no doubt, Bobby's sights were high during his last campaign. He had a passion for helping those living in ghettos. He wanted to right the wrongs of the world: These repeatedly expressed Kennedy goals began to seem genuine to even the most cynical reporters. If this assertion of compassion had started out as a political device to attract votes, it hadn't stayed that way. Bobby soon had a glint in his eyes. He was a believer – or had become a believer – in what he was preaching. That was why he was so effective with the crowds whose hands sought to touch the candidate's own outstretched hands.

Kennedy was very accessible to reporters. Most of us got our share of time and quotes directly from the candidate or his press aide, Frank Mankiewicz. Bobby was more like a traveling companion than some candidates, who can be aloof and self-important.

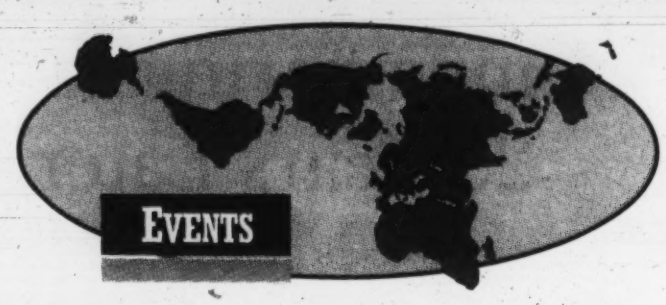
I can also say I saw the beginning of Kennedy's presidential candidacy. It was at a Monitor-sponsored breakfast at the National Press Club in late winter of 1968, shortly after the New Hampshire primary, in which Eugene McCarthy had embarrassed President Johnson and shown his vulnerability. The question that morning in the club's presidential room where we met was, of course, "Would Bobby, considering these new circumstances, now get into the race?"

Around the table that morning were a number of print journalism's heavy hitters: Peter Lisagor, Robert Donovan, Philip Potter, Ted Lewis, Richard Strout, Robert Novak, Robert Thompson, and David Broder, among others. The grilling was intense as they pressed hard for an answer.

At first, Kennedy held to a position that he had taken whenever asked: He was not going to run. Entering the race was, in fact, in his words, "not conceivable." But about midway in the hour-long session, someone brought in the news that Hanoi's Tet offensive had broken out in Vietnam with disastrous results to US forces.

On hearing this news, Bobby's adamancy about running began to soften. You could hear it in his voice. And soon he seemed to be finding reasonableness in a suggestion by one of the newsmen that Kennedy could not now in good conscience resist an opportunity to become president and end a war to which he had become so bitterly opposed. His answer about running began to change from "not conceivable" to "not foreseeable." He obviously was getting in. And by the time some of us went down the elevator with him he was making it plain to us that he was, indeed, a candidate.

Books that were written later about that Kennedy quest for the presidency called this breakfast session the "beginning." Indeed, one book started with the breakfast.



RABIN RESHUFFLES ISRAEL'S CABINET

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin carried out a dizzying reshuffle of the Israeli Cabinet on Sunday to resolve a government crisis, which he said could have disrupted Middle East peace talks. The coalition crisis began last month when the ultra-orthodox Shas party demanded the ouster of Education Minister Shulamit Aloni, an outspoken critic of Israel's powerful rabbis and leader of the left-wing Meretz party. Mrs. Aloni initially refused to step aside, but in an agreement approved by the Cabinet in an emergency session Sunday night, she will hand over the ministry to a Meretz colleague and receive another Cabinet post. Several Labor ministers agreed to switch portfolios to accommodate Meretz. In return, the Shas party will stay in the coalition government.

Aspin on Bosnia strategy

Defense Secretary Les Aspin said yesterday that a carefully crafted policy must be in place before US and allied lives are put in jeopardy to stem bloodshed in the former Yugoslavia. The secretary's comments at wreath-laying ceremony near Anzio Beach in Italy came after NATO leaders last week were unable to reach agreement on how to implement a new Western plan for Bosnia.

Fighting in Bosnia

Croat-Muslim fighting erupted anew in the southwest Bosnian town of Mostar, where Croat troops have forced hundreds of Muslims from their homes in recent days, a United Nations relief official said yesterday. Fighting also was reported yesterday around Sarajevo and the besieged eastern town of Gorazde, where Serb forces are on the offensive. The upsurge in fighting came during a period of uncertainty over efforts to end Bosnia's war following the Bosnian Serbs' rejection of an international peace plan.

Uffizi blast

Italian authorities say they still do not have any suspects in last week's bombing outside the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. But Interior Minister Nicola Mancino accused the Mafia of being behind the blast, which killed five people and wrecked a wing of Italy's premier art gallery.

US pushes Russian reforms

Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen intends to present a warning this week to Russian President Boris Yeltsin: Get your economy under control. During three days of discussions in Moscow, Mr. Bentsen's aides say his message will be simple: If Yeltsin expects to receive the full $28.4 billion in Western aid promised for this year, he must quickly begin to show tangible progress in getting a handle on his chaotic economy.

Miami returns to normal

Florida National Guard troops packed their gear and went home as calm and a holiday atmosphere prevailed in Miami's inner city, two days after a policeman was acquitted in the deaths of two black men. The verdict Friday in the case of suspended Officer William Lozano was followed by a night of brief disturbances and sporadic rock- and bottle-throwing. But police reported no incidents Saturday and Sunday.

The Boston Times?

The New York Times is on the verge of buying the Boston Globe, according to Time magazine. The magazine says in its June 7 edition that the New York Times Company is preparing to buy the Boston newspaper from its parent company, Affiliated Publications, for $1 billion. Spokesmen for both newspapers did not confirm the report.

Fittipaldi wins Indy

Emerson Fittipaldi says his experience made the difference down the stretch as he won his second Indianapolis 500 by just 2.8 seconds. The Brazilian took the lead on lap 185 and held on, outfoxing Formula One champion Nigel Mansell and runner-up Arie Luyendyk in Sunday's race.

New box office champ

Sylvester Stallone was back on top in the nation's theaters as "Cliffhanger" opened with projected earnings of $20 million. The action picture outperformed two other new, heavily promoted films – "Made in America" and "Super Mario Bros" – and pushed the Sharon Stone thriller "Sliver" back to sixth place.

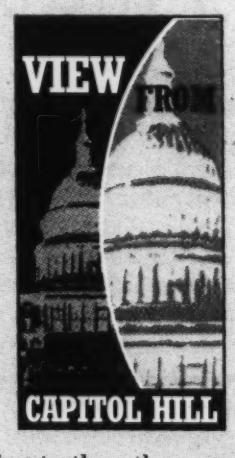
– Compiled by Max Boot

Keeping Tally of TV Violence

By Byron L. Dorgan

IMAGINE the following scene: A large truck drives up to your house, and a man in an expensive suit gets out and knocks on your door. He's come to make a proposition. He has a troupe of actors and a lot of dazzling props, and he wants to take over your family room and put on a show for your kids.

The actors will shoot, stab, and beat one another; they will teach your children to solve problems and to settle disputes by killing.



Is there a parent in this country who would accept that offer? More likely, he or she would call the police. Yet this transaction happens millions of times every day in America. But because it happens through TV, parents have a much harder time guarding their doors.

Parents need help, and the federal government should give them some. Media violence in the nation has reached epidemic proportions. During the anything-goes '80s, prime-time violence tripled, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children, moreover, are the major targets. Last year there were 32 acts of violence per hour on kids' TV – a record.

By the time children finish elementary school, they will have witnessed 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of TV violence.

If this is too much, and I think it is, then the question becomes what to do. It is not government's role in this country to tell people what they can watch. Nor should government try to tell broadcasters and sponsors what they can put on TV. But government can and should help parents talk back to the media. That's why I have proposed the Television Violence Report Card Act of 1993, which would require the Federal Communications Commission to issue quarterly reports on the amount of violence on TV, listed both by the show and by the sponsor.

I can hear the media executives in Manhattan and Los Angeles, claiming there's no evidence that violence on TV is harmful to kids. "I don't think we know enough yet," said one executive recently.

But parents know better. The National Institute of Mental Health and a host of other researchers have confirmed what most parents have observed: There is a connection between what kids see on TV and how they behave.

"I'd be lying if I said that people don't imitate what they see on the screen," said Lawrence Gordon, who produced the 1979 movie, "The Warriors." The movie was recalled because it prompted so much violence on the part of young viewers.

There seems to be a breakdown in accountability here. But accountability gets diluted when huge corporations speak through the mass media. There is no face-to-face contact. It is all impersonal and anonymous. That is why we have to do a little extra to help families and communities regain their rightful roles as bulwarks of values in our society. We have to restore the law of social causes and effects, the connection between what institutions do and the way society responds to them.

The federal government spends hundreds of millions of dollars a year gathering demographic data, census figures and the like, that business advertisers use to target consumers. Now it's time to gather data parents can use to help protect their children.

This is neither censorship nor regulation. It is a market-based solution to the problem of TV violence.

If Americans don't think this violence matters, then it will continue. But if they do care, and send their market message accordingly, then it will change. That's the way a democracy and a market economy are supposed to work.

■ *Sen. Byron L. Dorgan (D) of North Dakota is a member of the Senate Commerce Committee.*